

1990 Press Cuttings

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Hackney marches for brutality victims

HACKNEY'S Annual Commemoration

March for those who have died or been badly injured in the custody of Hackney police officers takes place on Monday January 8.

This years' procession will take place three years to the day in 1987 when Trevor Monerville had emergency brain surgery to remove a blood clot after being

held at Stoke Newington police station.

Colin Roach, who was shot dead in the foyer of Stoke Newington police station in 1983, was one in a catalogue of deaths at the hands of police officers in Hackney and throughout Britain in the seventies and eighties.

Before the march, relatives of those who have suffered will

address the marchers and supporters.

Wreaths will be laid by the families of those who have died along the route from Hackney police station, through Dalston, to Stoke Newington.

The "We Remember" torchlit procession will assemble at Hackney police station, Lower Clapton Road E8, at 7pm.

CT 2.1.90

Police chief calls for 'new beginning'

AS DEMONSTRATORS gear themselves up to march on the borough's police stations in an annual protest against alleged brutality, Hackney's top cop has pleaded with them to let bygones be bygones.

Next Monday's torchlit procession has been organised by the Hackney Community Defence Association to commemorate people who have died or been injured in police custody.

They say it is meant both as a reminder to residents, and as a warning to police that illegal behaviour won't be tolerated.

Few would deny that relations between the police and the community have been stretched to breaking point

by STEWART FOWLER

in the past, reaching a low point with the 1982 riots. But the man in charge of Hackney's police, Chief Superintendent Peter Twist, has called for a "new beginning." He regrets the march has to take place at all.

"I would like to think that the unfortunate occurrences of the past can be laid to rest, and that a new beginning based upon the improved relationship between police and the local commun-

ity can commence," he said.

And with the Stoke Newington "super-nick" opening shortly, he added: "I am confident that, barring the accidents that will inevitably happen from time to time with people who are under the influence of drink or drugs, no person is likely to die in police custody in the new police station."

But demonstrators have reacted angrily to his words.

A spokesman for the Hackney Community Defence Association said:

"This march on Monday night will go ahead as planned.

"This year, as have previous years, has been marred by a whole range of incidents in Hackney.

"There has still been no satisfactory explanation for past deaths and assaults, such as the death of Colin Roach or the beating of Trevor Monerville, who needed a brain operation after being held in Stoke Newington police station.

"The reference to accidents under the influence of drink and drugs is important, as Hackney police often use that explanation - particularly with young black men - after the event as a way of explaining what has happened before that has been established."



● Trevor Monerville: "no satisfactory explanation for his treatment."

Jamie Stewart family join inquest reform call

THE relatives of Jamie Stewart, the 22-year-old Stamford Hill electrician who died while in custody in Holloway police station, have joined a new pressure group calling for reforms to coroner's inquests.

An inquest into the death of Mr Stewart, of Wicklow House, is to be held on January 25.

He died after being arrested for a minor driving offence.

His sister Dee Stewart has joined the United Families Campaign, consisting of the families of 18 people who have died in police custody.

They want the legal right for families to call their own witnesses at inquests and to address the coroner on the facts at an inquest.

They also want coroners to have the power to refer cases to further inquiry.

Supernick is set to open

STOKE Newington's "supernick" will finally open on April 2 it was revealed this week.

Dalston's top cop, Chief Supt Peter Twist, said they will move in to the £1.2 million police station whether it's finished or not.

"This moving date is absolutely certain," he said. "We shall move in even if it's not ready." An official opening ceremony will be held about a month or two later, he said.

Work started after the original Victorian station was demolished in spring 1987. The new nick will give Stoke Newington police some of the most modern facilities in the country.

HC 5.1.90

March against police brutality — see centre pages



Relations of those killed or injured in police custody led Monday night's march from Hackney police station

NEWSLINE

10.1.90

victims on the march

BY JIM GRAHAM

ON MONDAY night 60 people marched through the streets of Hackney in East London in remembrance of all those killed or maimed whilst in police custody.

Since 1971 there has been an alarming number of deaths in Hackney police stations.

Before the torchlight demonstration a rally was held to condemn the police brutality.

The marchers were welcomed by the Hackney Community Defence Association, and were told that he had changed in 1989, the death of Jamie Stewart in July and the shooting close to death of Raphael Joseph in the same month.

Community

Tonight is our night when we remember what the police have done to our community, the chairman of the HCDA said.

Trevor Monerville, who was viciously beaten from head to toe at Stoke Newington police station in 1971, said: 'I was arrested when I went out to enjoy myself on New Year's Eve. I woke up in the hospital and I've never felt the same since being in the hands of the Stoke Newington police'.

After Trevor's ordeal he went into a coma and had to undergo emergency surgery.

Safiye Hassan, whose son was killed at Dalston police station in 1987, supposedly of a 'drugs overdose', said: 'My son died on the 11th June at 7.30 in the morning but the police didn't bother to tell us until the evening. They say that they didn't know who he was - it was a lie'.

My son was a good and loving boy who loved

'It's not just my son I am fighting for - it's for every family who has lost their son'
Mrs Safiye Hassan



SAFIYE HASSAN

children. It's not just my son I am fighting for but every family who has lost their son.

'I cry day and night waiting for my son to come back to me. The police took my son away from me'.

Pamela Simms said she was at the demonstration on behalf of her mother Aseta who died at Stoke Newington police station in 1971.

'When I went to visit her body in the morgue she had been battered. Justice has got to be done', she said angrily.

'We were six children just waiting for their mother to come home, but when the

police came into our house they were putting their hands in her jewellery box.

'It is still inside me now what the police did to my mother'.

Aseta Simms' granddaughter Nicky Bogle, a member of the Young Socialists, said: 'I am not here to fight for myself but for my grandmother'.

'I don't like the way the police harass people in the streets. I want justice to be done and on this night.'

Gary Stretch from Hoxton spoke of how he, at 5ft 4, was set upon by seven fit and hefty plain-clothes policemen outside a pub, and left lying in the gutter with his left ear hanging off.

'There were sixty-odd statements from independent witnesses and yet the DPP turned me down because they said there was "insufficient evidence".'

'I was very frightened to speak here tonight but hearing the other speakers has encouraged me to say what has to be said.'

'It could have been my mother standing here remembering her dead son.'

'We must remember all those who have suffered at the hands of the police'.

Raphael Joseph told of how he was chased by the

police who rammed his motorcycle, knocking him off it.

'I was so terrified as they beat me that I was doing it in my pants. Surely we are human beings, yet they treat us like animals.'

'In the back of the police van I was begging for my life. I was handcuffed, and even though I pleaded for my life, for them to stop, they just kept on beating me.'

'We want justice! We want to be treated like human beings and not like how the Nazis would treat us'.

After the rally outside Hackney police station, a lively demonstration marched to Dalston police station where a one-minute silence was held.

Wreath

Tunay Hassan's mother laid a wreath for her son as did his sister, Sevilay Tecimer, in memory of all the other victims of police brutality.

Along the route of the march to Stoke Newington police station a contingent from the Workers Revolutionary Party and Young Socialists shouted 'Defend the Youth from State Attacks, Smash the Tory Police State', 'Release the Tottenham 3, Release the Birmingham 6' and 'Romania today, Britain tomorrow - Kick the Tories out!'.

Some of those taking part in the rally told the News Line what they hoped to see in 1990.

Safiye Hassan said that her son's case was going to court this year and added: 'In 1990 we want to win our case for justice. I want to clear my son's name because he did nothing. He never hurt anyone'.

Trevor Monerville said: 'In the 1990s everybody's looking for a change. The police need sorting out.'

Gary Stretch said: 'What I'd like to see happen in 1990 is a lot of people get involved but not to wait until they've been affected.'



TREVOR MONERVILLE



The families of the victims of police brutality carry the banner at the front of the demonstration

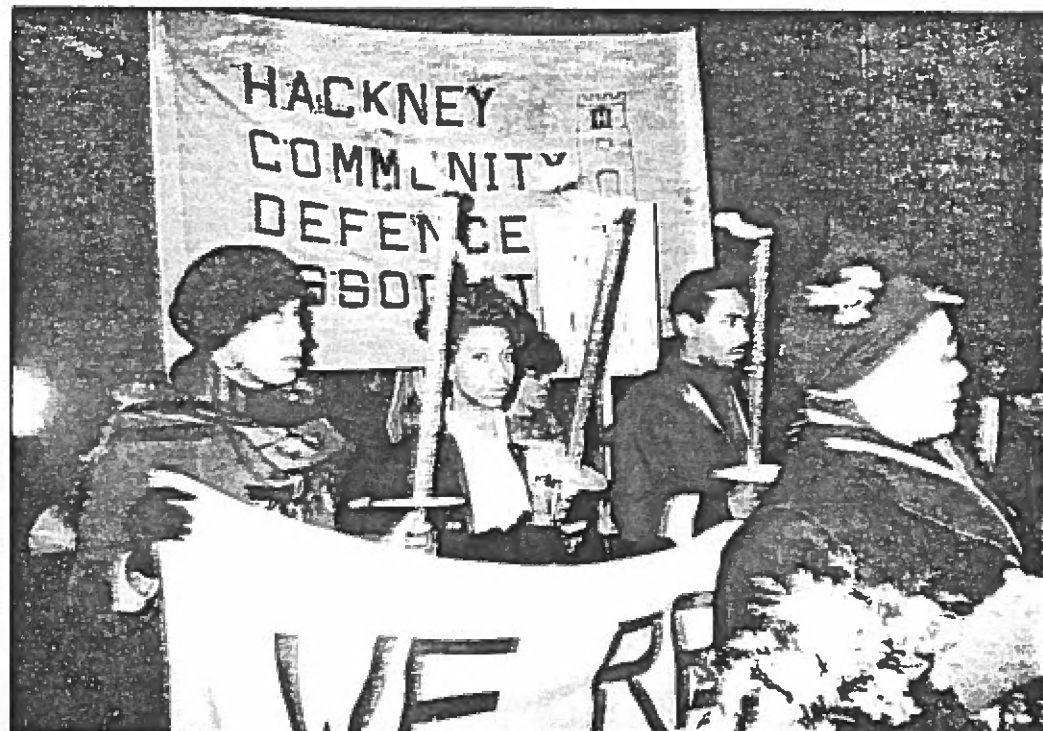
My mum never got involved in anything until what happened to me.

'She used to think the police were alright before. But it's not just the police, it goes right down the line to what the government are doing. They even tell strikers what they should do.'

'I feel very strongly about the ambulance workers' dispute. I want to see people come together not when their family is affected or when ambulance workers lose their jobs.'

'Ambulance workers are just the tip of the iceberg. We saw it with the miners that it goes right down the line.'

'I am frightened of what is happening, people have got to stand up and say how they are being affected.'



PAMELA SIMMS (left) and her niece NICKY BOGLE - relatives of Aseta Simms, killed by the police in 1971, at the front of the march with TREVOR MONERVILLE and the mother of Colin Roach (right)

DEVIL DOG MAULS POLICEWOMAN

Police lead on
illegal dog
fighting ring

A FEROCIOUS fighting dog savaged a volunteer policewoman this week.

Now police are probing claims that a sadistic dog-fighting syndicate is operating in Hackney.

The devil dog – a pit bull terrier – cornered special constable Christine Staken, 20, in a bakery and ripped her heel off.

The animal was captured and taken to Hackney Police station to be destroyed. It was covered in scars consistent with the battle-wounds of an experienced fighting dog.

The frenzied attack adds new evidence to an ever-growing dossier of information which suggests the sickening "sport" has taken a foothold in Hackney.

A growing number of Staffordshire

by MARTIN TALBOT

Family pets stolen to spar with pit bulls

bull terrier pets have mysteriously vanished in recent weeks – feared kidnapped to act as sparring-partners for pit bulls.

Det Sgt Buzz Goodingham said: "We know dog-fighting goes on and that it could be happening in Hackney. We want to hear from anyone with information about this evil sport."

Hackney's RSPCA Inspector John Storey added: "My gut reaction is that there is something going on in Hackney. Hopefully I can meet with police to share our information and get to the bottom of this."

The RSPCA's top investigator Det

Supt Frank Milner added: "Dog fighting is a priority area for investigation. If there has been a spate of thefts in Hackney, we will look into it."

Bethnal Green-based Special WPC Staken, who lives in Stoke Newington, was off-duty when she was chased by the snarling pit bull in Dalston Lane. It cornered her after leaping out from a disused shop on Wednesday morning.

Have-a-go bakery assistant Phillip Chattey, 17, of nearby Queensbridge Road, was repeatedly bitten on the arm as he tried to defend her.

Hackney has become London's centre for pit bulls, with hundreds of the borough's families owning the ferocious dogs as pets.

Two separate owners were told from different sources that their dogs had been stolen for "sparring" with pit bulls. One paid £100 to an anonymous caller who stole it back for her.

Now Enfield police are probing a possible link between the spate of Staffordshire bull terrier thefts in Hackney with a fighting ring in North London.

HG 12.1.90



● Demonstrators on the torchlit march.

Tempers flare at police custody deaths demo

POLICE and campaigners have once again clashed angrily over the annual march to remember people who have died or been injured in police custody, with both sides lining up to trade insults.

Defiant protesters went ahead with the march in the teeth of opposition from Hackney's top cop, Chief Superintendent Peter Twist who had earlier called for the march to be scrapped as "a new beginning" in police and community relations.

Funeral wreaths were laid outside the borough's police stations on Monday night by demonstrators, led by Trevor Monerville, the young man who underwent a brain operation after being held at Stoke Newington police station three years ago. A minute's silence was observed as part of the remembrance ceremony.

The torchlit protesters carried banners and placards naming individuals who have been at the centre of controversy in the past few years, including Colin Roach, Tunay Hassan, Michael Ferreira, and Gary Stretch. Relatives and family members of many of those named took part in the procession.

But a war of words between the police and the Hackney Community Defence Association, who organised the march, marred what was supposed to be a dignified commemoration.

Chief Supt Peter Twist commented: "I am dismayed that I had to use my officers to police the march when there were so many other important things for them to do. The

March ends in wreath laying



● Trevor Monerville

demonstrators were chanting that Hackney police should be shot and hanged - if they find such sentiments amusing they must have a very warped sense of humour.

"Numerous people who read their banners told them in no uncertain terms what they thought of them. Were it not for our presence I consider a breach of the peace would undoubtedly have occurred."

Campaigners quickly hit back, claiming the police were deliberately trying to provoke trouble on the march in the hope of banning it in future.

"They were very heavy-handed," said Graham Smith, one of the organisers. "We were there to remember the dead, but for the first time ever the police refused to stop traffic while we laid our wreaths and held a minute's silence, despite repeated appeals to do so."

"They showed no respect whatsoever, and think they were trying to provoke an incident. I certainly thought people were going to lose their temper with them."

"Peter Twist seems determined to condemn everyone on the march, and make as much political mileage out of it as he can."

Tourist's passport wrangle ended in death plunge

A DESPERATE German tourist who was left stranded and virtually penniless after police refused to hand over his travel documents following his arrest on drugs and firearms charges, didn't necessarily kill himself in an inquest decided.

A friend of Jurgen Fuchs, 34, who was found dead after a fall from the 11-lunging Social Services building Highbury Crescent on November 16, said he had become paranoid about the police while in Germany.

In a statement to St Pancras Coroner's court, hotel receptionist Jurgen Schimanski, 24, of Burma Road, Stoke Newington, said Mr Fuchs had taken cannabis and amphetamines since he'd known him, and worried constantly about being caught by the police.

Mr Schimanski said Mr Fuchs came to visit him and was arrested 10 minutes after being collected at King's Cross Station on September 6.

After Mr Fuchs made several appearances at Highbury Magistrates' Court charged with possessing cannabis and a CS gas gun the prosecution was dropped, said Mr Schimanski. His friend then had difficulty getting his travel documents back.

"He couldn't leave, his ticket and passport had been taken and he couldn't get them back, even after his case had been discharged," said Mr Schimanski. "He became very distressed and asked his parents in Germany to send money."

Det. Sgt Peter Myers said that the case was discharged because of a police laboratory hold up. But when the evidence arrived on November 13, just four days after Mr Fuchs' last court appearance, he decided to re-charge him.

"Mr Fuchs called at Dalston police station wanting his papers, but I told him he would be re-charged, and a decision would arrive from the Crown Prosecution Service within two weeks," said DS Myers.

"He didn't seem to me to be distressed or depressed," said the officer who added that, ironically, Mr Fuchs' wish for a photocopy of his papers so that he could release bank funds, was granted on November 16 just hours after his death.

Pathologist Dr Vesna Djurovic who carried out the post mortem on Mr Fuchs said he died of severe head injuries and substantial multiple injuries, including a fractured skull.

Coroner Dr Douglas Chambers recorded an open verdict after deciding there was insufficient evidence to suggest that Fuchs would take his own life.

Pub guy nor claims police assault

THE TENANT of a Bethnal Green pub who claims he was assaulted and intimidated by police has issued a High Court writ.

Publican John Davies says he was assaulted at the White Hart pub in Bethnal Green Road on October 2, 1987. He is claiming damages, exemplary damages and aggravated damages from the Metropolitan Police Commissioner.

Detained

Mr Davies, now of Balsam Street, Plaistow, alleges he was falsely imprisoned, wrongfully arrested and unlawfully detained, and maliciously prosecuted for matters arising from arrests on four separate occasions in 1986.

Alternatively, he is seeking damages for alleged negligence by the Commissioner in "permitting him to be so assaulted" and "further caused by acts of nuisance or unlawful harassment or intimidation" between January 25, 1985, and April, 1987.

The writ also seeks alternative damages for alleged conspiracy between police officers, and trespass caused by allegedly unlawful police raids in 1985 and 1986.

Pc cleared of assault was 'a victim of mistaken identity'

A POLICEMAN accused of hitting an off-duty soldier over the head with a truncheon after an England-Wembley soccer match was found not guilty at Wood Green Crown Court on Tuesday due to lack of evidence.

Pc Alexander Danks, 29, based at Hackney, had been charged with assaulting Mr Gareth Arnold outside Wembley Stadium on March 23, 1988, causing him actual bodily harm.

Mr Arnold, a 22-year-old soldier now based in West Germany, told the court a police officer struck him on the forehead with a truncheon in an unprovoked assault.

He said he had travelled from Hampshire with fellow off-duty soldiers and they were making their way back to their car when the incident happened.

They were ushered on to a crowded walkway. There was "a lot of pushing and shoving, but I did

not see any violence," said Mr Arnold. After police made an opening through the centre of the crowd using horses, Mr Arnold said he saw a policeman "leaning over and beating a man who was lying on the floor, with his truncheon."

Mr Arnold said he approached the officer saying words like "you can't do that" or "leave him alone."

He continued: "Then he glanced at me and swore. I proceeded towards him and said: 'I want your number.'"

Cut forehead

Mr Arnold said the officer struck him over the head with one vertical blow with his truncheon, making him fall to the ground and causing a cut to his forehead.

Mr Andrew Baillie, prosecuting, told the court the case may rest on a question of identity. Pc Danks was only charged with the assault when, two days after the incident, he said he recognised Mr Ar-

nold as the man who was wielding an iron bar.

Mr Arnold and his friends had failed to recognise Pc Danks as the officer involved in the incident and counsel for the defence argued that a guilty verdict would be "unsafe".

Mr Brian Lett said it was all a matter of mistaken identity. Mr Arnold could not possibly identify Pc Danks and likewise Pc Danks was mistaken to suggest that Mr Arnold was the person wielding the iron bar.

Mr Lett added that it had been established from police videos that Mr Arnold could not have been the person involved because of his location and clothing.

Judge Leonard Gerber directed the jury to return a verdict of not guilty, saying: "I haven't the slightest doubt that Mr Arnold was assaulted and that it was a disgraceful incident."

"But it would be a greater injustice to convict the wrong man," added the judge.



ie Simms, Monerville and Hassan families lead the protesters through Hackney's streets

Protestors defy Hackney police to remember those who died in custody

AST LONDON residents last week defied a request by Hackney's Chief Superintendent Peter Twist to abandon a demonstration to commemorate the people who have died or suffered serious injury whilst in custody of Hackney,

Stoke Newington and Dalston police stations. The demonstration took the form of a rally outside Hackney police station which was addressed by Trevor Monerville, the young man who underwent a major operation following his arrest by Stoke Newington officers

in January 1987. Trevor's short address to the assembly maintained that he remembered being arrested and later waking up in hospital days later. **Suspicious** Other speakers included Mrs Munur, the mother of Tunay Hassan, the man who lost his life in suspicious circumstances following his arrest by Dalston police officers in 1988; Pamela Simms, who spoke of the trauma she experienced aged eleven years when her mother died following a confrontation with Stoke Newington police officers in 1971; Gary Stretch, the local youth who was taken to hospital to save his ear after a run-in with seven local police officers; and Rafael Joseph, who alleged that the serious injuries he suffered last summer were a direct result of his arrest by eighteen police officers.

The march was well-ordered and disciplined, although mourners and organisers felt that the police's refusal to halt traffic during the one minute's silence in memory of Tunay Hassan at Dalston and Aseta Simms,

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Colin Roach at Stoke Newington was unreasonable. One organiser questioned the decision as the police had accorded the proper respect on previous years.

Rejected

Chief Superintendent Twist rejected the demands for an independent public inquiry into policing amongst the three stations and said further that he felt that the march wasted his officers' time as there were "more important things for them to do".

"All deaths in police custody have been properly investigated and those which took place after the formation of the independent Police Complaints Authority have been referred to them. I don't see any need for this," he said.

Chief Superintendent Twist referred to the transfer of nine off-duty Hackney officers involved in the recent stag night rampage on two local bars predominantly frequented by black patrons as "a regrettable incident" that was being investigated by Scotland Yard's complaints board.

Prosecution

"The allegations are also being investigated by the Director of Public Prosecutions and if proved may lead to the removal of the officers from the force," he continued.

None of the transferred officers have been charged with any offence.

CT 16.1.90

Police accused of smear campaign

A STOKE NEWINGTON man is being victimised by police officers because he is suing them for assault, battery and false imprisonment.

So say watchdog group Hackney Community Defence Association, who have taken up the case of Raphael Joseph.

Mr Joseph is suing the Metropolitan Police after he ended up in hospital suffering multiple injuries during a high-speed chase and arrest in July last year.

In August, Mr Joseph, 50, from Kyverdale Road, was arrested again after a dispute in the street. He was taken to Dalston police station where, according to HCDA, an officer said: "You are famous now" and told another officer: "Charge him with assault".

Last week the Crown Prosecution Service dropped all charges against Mr Joseph just one week before he was due to appear at Highbury Magistrates' Court. HCDA say the whole point of the second arrest was to smear Mr Joseph and ruin his chances of success in a legal action.

"This represents yet another attempt by the police to criminalise those who fight back against police injustice by portraying them as aggressive and violent criminals," say HCDA.

Chief Supt Peter Twist, of Dalston police, was unavailable for comment as the Gazette went to press.

HC 19.1.90

MARSH PROBE COPS GO HI-TECH

Ex-boxing champ quizzed at 'state of the art' station



● Former world boxing champion Terry Marsh.

Police accused of smear campaign

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Chief Supt Peter Twist, of Dalston police, was unavailable for comment as the Gazette went to press.

FORMER world boxing champion Terry Marsh, arrested in connection with the shooting of promoter Frank Warren, was quizzed at Hackney police station because it has some of the most sophisticated, hi-tech interview rooms in the country.

When the 31-year-old former world light-welterweight title holder was arrested at Gatwick Airport on Wednesday morning, detectives rushed him straight to the station in Lower Clapton Road.

Investigations into November's shooting of Islington-born Warren outside the Barge Aground pub in Barking had been based at North Woolwich.

But police switched to Hackney once Marsh was arrested after flying in from Newark, New Jersey.

"Terry Marsh is being held at Hackney police station because we have very good facilities here," Hackney's top cop, Chief Superintendent Niall Mulvihill, told the Gazette on Wednesday.

"We have one of the best crime investigation suites that you can find."

Equipment

Two years ago, Hackney was the first station in East London to get the new equipment. It is now used nationwide.

Detectives were questioning Stepney-born Marsh in one of two sound-proofed rooms which cut out unwanted noise from the rest of the station.

Both rooms are equipped with expensive twin cassette decks which are designed to end legal disputes over what is said during interviews.

Tape vault

Two tapes of the police interview with Marsh will have been made. One will be copied, so that both detectives and Marsh's solicitor will have a record.

The other tape is immediately sealed and sent off to a "tape vault" in Cricklewood, where they are kept for at least two years.

They can only be unsealed on the orders of a judge.

The system is designed so the tapes cannot be tampered with. All recordings are time-coded to ensure they cannot be edited, and police say the taping puts an end to allegations that confessions are obtained under duress.

Involvement denied

Marsh is one of about 5,000 people a year who are interviewed using the system.

As the Gazette went to press at midday on Thursday, no charges had been laid and Marsh was still being questioned.

Through his solicitor he had denied any involvement with the shooting of Frank Warren.



● Frank Warren.

No way to develop a trusting relationship

DID the Gazette send a reporter, as well as a photographer, to the march against Hackney police violence? If you had, he or she would have known that there was never any risk of a "breach of the peace" occurring between marchers and onlookers.

I was therefore astonished to read in your article the quote from Chief Supt Twist claiming "numerous people who read the banners told them in no uncertain terms what they thought of them". The only reaction I saw from passers-by were a few waves and smiles from the top of a bus.

The big banners only carried the names of the organisations like Hackney Community Defence Association - not exactly provocative, except perhaps to a very paranoid police chief. The little ones, which had details of what the march was about, were printed in tiny writing in red on black (don't ask me why!) so, as it happens, were totally illegible to anyone more than a foot away.

Obviously, the event was a painful one for the police: people who had lost their nearest family in police custody and people who had been savagely beaten by police gave moving accounts of what had happened, and the police had to stand and listen.

But if the most intelligent and compassionate response the local police chief can make is to invent a story suggesting that we, the marchers, threatened violence on the streets, it seems that indeed no lesson has been learned. How can Supt Twist possibly hope to develop a relationship of trust with the community when he lies about us? - KATE DE SELINCOURT, LAWLEY STREET, LOWER CLAPTON.

Man vindicated as CPS drops charges

RAPHAEL JOSEPH, the Stoke Newington man who is suing Dalston police officers for alleged assault and battery and false imprisonment last July, has seen the Crown Prosecution Services drop preferred charges of assault against a police officer just one week before he was due in court.

The charges against Mr Joseph relate to an incident which took place last August and led to Mr Joseph being picked from a group of people by officers. At Dalston station Mr Joseph says one police

officer told him he was "famous now" before charging him with assault.

The CPS have decided not to proceed with the prosecution due to lack of evidence.

The local Hackney Community Defence Association (HCDA) have cited Mr Joseph's case as an example of the type of harassment east London police officers inflict on citizens who decide to pursue civil actions against them.

"The entire community condemns the police's persecution of a person who has challenged their abuse of power," said an HCDA spokesperson.

CT 23.1.90

Wrongful arrest threat as drug charge is dropped



● Glenford Lewis — lost two jobs over case.

A MAN who claims Dalston policemen beat him up and tried to frame him is planning to sue them for wrongful and malicious arrest.

Charges against Dalston's Glenford Lewis of possessing and intending to supply a prescribed drug were dropped at Snaresbrook Crown Court on Monday.

The prosecution said a police officer offering crucial evidence was too ill to turn up — the same officer Mr Lewis claims planted drugs in his car.

But Mr Lewis, who has protested his innocence since his arrest last May, claims police were afraid the court would realise the evidence was fabricated.

Now he is consulting his solicitors over plans to take out a civil action against the police. Hackney Community Defence Association are supporting his case.

Mr Lewis, 33, of Dalston's Holly Street Estate, told the Gazette: "I feel really bad about this whole thing. I've twice lost a job over this — it has cost me a lot."

"The police were saying I was using my car for dealing in drugs. But I haven't been near it for a year, it just simply can't be driven. At the end of the day I'm free which is good, but it's only because of luck."

Mr Lewis, who was jailed after a first offence of possession of drugs in 1988, had been out of prison for three months when he was arrested in May. He was thrown in the back of a van in Dalston's Sandringham Road and beaten up by about six plain-clothes policemen, he claims.

The men said he "had not got a long enough sentence last time," he says, and he was taken

to Dalston police station and accused of drug dealing.

A strip-search found no drugs and detectives took Mr Lewis to his car, parked near his home on the Holly Street Estate. He claims a detective planted a matchbox containing cocaine in the car, along with a current newspaper to prove it had been used recently.

But Mr Lewis says he hadn't seen the car since it was confiscated by police on his arrest for the previous offence 12 months before. It had been picked up from the police compound by his girlfriend a month before he was released from prison, he claims, and the only set of keys were with his mother.

The car had a flat battery, no MOT, insurance or road tax and the tag from the police compound was still tied to the front windscreen wiper, he said. Forensic tests on the newspaper and the matchbox later found no fingerprints belonging to Mr Lewis.

Martin Walker of Hackney Community Defence Association said: "The police realised that because there were none of Glenford's fingerprints on the newspaper or the matchbox, there would have been serious repercussions if they had gone ahead with this."

Dalston's top cop, Chief Superintendent Peter Twist said: "The officer in question is seriously ill with a long-term back problem which meant that for the foreseeable future his attendance at court is medically out of the question."

"If Mr Lewis, or his solicitor would care to contact me personally, I will arrange for a formal complaint against police to be recorded, and their allegations will be rigorously investigated."

Police scrap height rules to get new recruits

PINT-SIZED police are set to make a big impact on the streets of Hackney, after the Metropolitan Police scrapped their height rules this week.

The borough's top cops hope the plan will end the shortage of new ethnic minority trainees and improve their dismal record on recruiting Asian officers.

Out of 800 policemen in Hackney there are just 12 ethnic minority officers — a pitiful 1.5 per cent of the borough's establishment.

Stand

But that could all change after Monday's decision by the Met to scrap the rules stating policemen have to stand at least 5ft 8ins tall, and policewomen 5ft 4ins. This will open the door to hundreds of Bangladeshi, Vietnamese and Chinese applicants who want to join the force, but are too short under existing rules, they say.

Supt Dave Dugmore, the chief of Hackney's community liaison unit, welcomed the idea: "The relaxation of this rule could open the way to lots of applications from the ethnic minorities," he said.

"I've often spoken to people in Hackney who have longed for a career in the police, but have given up because of their height."

"We are not happy with the current level of ethnic minority officers in Hackney. They are very important as they tend to have a better knowledge and awareness of the differences in cultures, and are often in a position to communicate more effectively with members from the respective communities."

But he ruled out claims that short police officers will be picked on by thugs and thieves. "Some short people are very well built and very fit," he said. "Besides, it's not simply a matter of physical prowess but approaching situations with the right attitude that makes a good police officer."

Police shame-faced in drugs frame-up

SHAME-FACED Dalston police officers last week shied away from giving evidence to Snaresbrook Court after a defendant accused them of planting drugs on him.

Glenford Lewis was attacked by six plain-clothes officers last May and taken to Dalston police station where he was charged with drugs possession after an officer claimed he had found an empty package which was discarded by Mr Lewis in

his attempt to escape arrest.

However, later tests found that the package had never actually contained drugs.

Possession

Mr Lewis was taken to his car, which had lain undriven outside his mother's home for three months, and was charged with possession with intention to sell after Detective Constable Northcote claimed he had taken a matchbox containing several wrapped packages of cocaine from

the vehicle.

However Mr Lewis said "I watched him (Northcote) take the matchbox out of his pocket place it in the car under a copy of a new newspaper to suggest I was using the car regularly and then claim he had found it in the car."

Mr Lewis' solicitor, Neil Russell, was forced to take out an injunction before the police would release the articles for forensic analysis.

The forensic tests proved that Mr Lewis

could not have handled either the newspaper or the matchbox as his fingerprints did not match those on the box or the paper.

DC Northcote has been on sick leave ever since Mr Russell took out the injunction last July. When DC Northcote refused to attend Snaresbrook Crown Court last week the other officers - only three out of the six - claimed they were unable to present their testimony adequately in his absence.



Glenford Lewis - set up?

Dalston's Chief Superintendent, Peter Twist, said DC Northcote was suffering the effects of a back complaint which made it impossible for him to attend court but said that Mr Lewis, or his solicitor, could register a formal complaint.

Mr Lewis says the incident has cost him two job opportunities

and intends to take out a civil action against the Metropolitan police force and the arresting officers.

A spokesperson for the Hackney Defence Association (HCDA) said the association was demanding that the arresting officers be suspended from duty until the case be brought to court.

CT 30.1.90

Drugs 'Fit-up' Claim

A Dalston man who claims police attacked, threatened and planted him with drugs walked free from Snaresbrook Crown Court last week after the police offered no evidence against him. Glenford Lewis now plans to sue for damages. He claims he was seized and punched in the face by several plain-clothes officers last May, and that one later planted a matchbox containing cocaine in his car. The drugs charge against Lewis was dropped last week because the same policeman was said to be too ill to attend court and because Lewis's fingerprints were never found on the matchbox. The 33-year-old welder told *Time Out* the officers taunted him with the prospect of a five-year sentence, saying he 'hadn't got long enough last time' — a reference to his six-month sentence on a previous drugs charge, to which he pleaded guilty. Lewis says the officers involved 'aren't fit to wear a police uniform'. Days before, Hackney police dropped an assault charge against a second man, Raphael Joseph, again because of lack of evidence. He claims the police were trying to harass him because he had earlier launched a civil action against them for assault and battery and wrongful imprisonment.



TO 31.1.90

Allegations of assault by police made at inquest

A CONCENTRATION of 75 milligrammes of cocaine was found in the blood of Jamie Stewart, who died while in custody at Holloway police station, an inquest heard.

Mr Raymond Fysh, a police forensic scientist, told St Pancras Coroner's Court that if that amount had been taken orally, seizures would have occurred in a matter of minutes and death would have followed within an hour.

He said it was the highest level he had come across.

Mr Stewart, a 22-year-old electrician of Wicklow House on Stoke Newington's Stamford Hill Estate, was found unconscious at the station in the early hours of July 1 last year, the inquest was told.

He had been arrested a few hours earlier in Hanley Road, Finsbury Park, in connection with an alleged offence relating to car documents.

Responding to questions from Mr Adrian Fulford, counsel for Mr Stewart's family, Mr Fysh said his life might have been saved if he had had his stomach pumped.

The pathologist, Dr David Rouse, who performed a post mortem, said Mr Stewart had died from cocaine poisoning. He had found scratches on his head, right arm and feet, but these did not contribute to his death.

The circumstances surrounding Mr Stewart's arrest were described by Adolph

Modeste, who was in the car with Mr Stewart and two other friends when it was stopped by police.

At the police station he was searched, said Mr Modeste, and when Mr Stewart began to walk towards an open door he was jumped on by two or three officers.

Other officers joined in, he said, and Mr Stewart was handcuffed. The policemen were kicking Mr Stewart, he alleged.

Questioned by Mr Fulford, Mr Modeste said by the time Mr Stewart was handcuffed he was choking and red in the face.

Pt Anthony Sullivan who was on duty as custody officer on the night said that at 1.44 am he went to Mr Stewart's cell and found him lying on his front with blood coming from his mouth. He asked for an ambulance to be called.

Pc Gordon Deans was on duty as station officer when Mr Stewart was arrested. He said he received bruises and cuts from Mr Stewart while trying to restrain him, and he reported these immediately.

Det Sgt Geoffrey Eaton, of the Police Complaints Bureau, said he had interviewed prisoners who were held at Holloway police station on the night Mr Stewart died. All of them said they had heard nothing except one, who refused to give a statement.

● The hearing continues.

HG 2.2.90

DEAD ON ARRIVAL?

DEAD ON ARRIVAL?

continued from p.1

He further claimed he had been called away to the telephone and when he returned Jamie "was not moving at all".

Police forensic scientist Raymond Fysh told the coroner he believed Jamie had swallowed 15 grammes of pure cocaine.

The toxicologist claimed that it was the highest level ever recorded and that it was enough to kill a man within one hour of ingestion.

A plastic bag found on the floor of the cell where Jamie died was believed to have been part of Jamie's vomit, he said.

The inquest returned a verdict of misadventure.

However, the Stewart family are far

from satisfied with the conduct of the coroner or the jury. The family believes that the police had an unfair advantage given they had four barristers lining up to cross-examine three witnesses - two of whom were underage - as opposed to one barrister presenting the family's case.

"The verdict claims Jamie died of a cocaine overdose but makes no attempt to explain when or how he took it," said a member of the Stewart family.

"There has been no attempt to question the conduct of the arresting officers despite their testimony suggesting they had ill-treated Jamie at the station," she continued.

"The verdict may stand but we refuse to accept it," she said.

THE RECORD THAT SHOULD NEVER BE FORGOTTEN - known names of some of those who died whilst in police custody or at police hands during the 1980s

1981 - Winston Rose

1982 - John Sugue, Simeon Collins

1983 Colin Roach, Matthew Paul, Nicholas Ofusu

1985 - John Mikkelsen, Cynthia Jarrett

1986 - Anthony Lemard

1987 - Clinton McCurbin, Neneh Jalloh, Mark Ventour

1988 - Oakley 'Ram I Dreadlocks' Ramsey

1989 - Jamie Stewart, Edwin Carr, Vincent Graham, Sullivan Bharwani, Bharat Persaud

HE inquest into the death of Jamie Stewart last week heard that the police officers who last saw him alive had taken part in a physical attack on him.

Jamie, 22, died in the cells of Holloway police station last July within one hour of his arrest for an alleged driving offence.

The Stewart family elicited the support of Slington North MP Jeremy Corbyn, who sat with them at St Pancras Coroner's Court throughout last week's hearing. In their demands for an independent public inquiry into the circumstances leading to Jamie's death.

One witness, 14 at the time of the incident, told the inquest that police had stopped the car and pulled up the seats and carpets.

by Michael Masive

She said the police told Jamie: "You've got to be hiding something."

Adolph Modeste, another passenger, told the inquest that the police had ordered Jamie to drop his trousers on the street.

When Jamie refused both he and Mr Modeste were taken to Holloway Road police station, leaving their two young passengers in the car. Mr Modeste further stated that some five to seven officers jumped upon Jamie immediately as he reached the station.

Mr Modeste said Jamie was dragged into a cell out of his eyesight but he heard sounds which led him to believe Jamie was being beaten.

Through a hatch in the door he said he saw

officers drag Jamie from the cell and attempt to resuscitate his apparently unconscious body.

Police Constables Stephen Joyes and John Sim claimed they stopped Jamie because he was driving above the speed limit. They further claimed that Jamie became "violent and aggressive".



Jamie Stewart

The Stewart family's solicitor, Adrian Fulford, told PC Joyes that he believed Jamie was incapable of standing for himself when he was placed in a cell.

Custody officer

Sergeant Anthony Sullivan denied the charge.

However, PC Joyes admitted that he was among several officers who piled atop Jamie during a struggle in the station's foyer.

"The struggle continued and we all ended up on the floor...we turned him onto his front and handcuffed his hands behind his back," said PC Joyes.

"We then escorted him to a cell and left him face down on the floor," he added.

Duty officer Inspector Anthony Macrae claims he gave instructions that Jamie be visited every half hour.

JAMIE STEWART
BORN 1967 - died in police custody July 1st 1989

continued on p.13

Police charges thrown out

A MAGISTRATE last week threw out serious charges made by Hackney police officers against a local cab driver because he disbelieved them.

Mr William Alexander Gordon faced Old Street Magistrates on charges of assault of a police officer, possession of an offensive weapon and flagrantly ignoring police demands to stop.

On November 3 1989 Mr Gordon attracted the attention of a police patrol car after he had beeped another vehicle which

made an illegal right turn on Mare Street, east London.

The officers insisted on searching Mr Gordon's car and discovered a penknife.

When Mr Gordon told PC McGowan that his car had been fitted with an intercom radio for the purpose of conducting his business as a mini-cab driver he was called a "lying black cunt".

When Mr Gordon protested he was hurled face down to the ground and handcuffed behind his back. Within moments some 10-15 police officers arrived on the scene to

take Mr Gordon to Hackney station.

Mr Gordon further claimed he had been assaulted in the van on the way to the station.

The prosecution claimed that 51 years-old Mr Gordon had been abusive to PC McGowan and had knocked him into the path of an oncoming bus.

Eye-witnesses

However, eye-witnesses contacted by the Hackney Community Defence Association (HCDA) immediately after the police's allegations.

The magistrate told the court that he regarded Mr Gordon and his witnesses to be credible and honest citizens and said he believed the police may have made up some of their evidence.

The HCDA, which has assisted three successful defences in the past four weeks, has demanded that police officers who have been found lying in court should be reprimanded immediately after the magistrate has indicated his dissatisfaction with their testimony.

"It is not good

enough for police officers proved to be violent and racist to be allowed to continue policing the community once they have been discovered lying in court," said an HCDA representative.

Punishment

"Police officers should be subjected to some form of punishment in the same manner as members of the public who are found guilty of some offence in court," he continued.

Mr Gordon is presently considering taking civil action against the police.

CT 6.2.90

Hackney police branded 'liars'.

Three men who claim they were assaulted by police in East London, are planning to sue.
QUENTIN McDERMOTT reports.

A magistrate inferred last week that two young officers from Hackney police station had brought false evidence to court. The constables appeared to explain why they had arrested part-time mini-cab driver William Gordon last November. Gordon, who is 51, stood accused of assaulting one of the officers, by punching him in the jaw and pushing him into the road, of possessing an offensive weapon - a pen-knife - and of failing to stop his car on police instructions.

No witnesses were called by the police, but Gordon, who protested that he had been assaulted by one of the officers, called three witnesses to back up his version of events.

Gordon told the court that he was arrested after tooting his horn at a van which was making an illegal right turn at a junction on Mare Street. Instead of stopping the van, the officers pulled him in. He stopped as soon as he could. Gordon says one of the officers called him 'a lying black cunt', after searching his car, and pushed him on to the bonnet, before both PCs dragged him on to a grass verge. Gordon was pulled to the ground, and one of the officers sat on the small of his back. He was screaming in pain. 'I felt as if I was going to

die,' he recalled. Gordon says he was thrown on the floor of a police van, and slapped in the face.

The officer Gordon accused of pushing and racially abusing him, Pc McGowan, claimed Gordon had pushed him into the road, into the path of an oncoming bus. Both officers denied abusing Gordon, or over-reacting when they arrested him. Both claimed only to have used 'authorised police holds' in restraining him.

But at the end of the case, the magistrate dismissed the charges. He accepted that the pen-knife was not an offensive weapon, and said he had found William Gordon a 'truthful' witness.

The magistrate said that, in his judgment, the bus referred to by Pc McGowan 'did not exist.' He added: 'It is quite clear that there was a scuffle which was started by a push by the officer.' Gordon had been justified in responding, and the officers had then 'over-reacted.'

After the hearing Gordon accused the officers of lying, and said he is planning to sue. In doing so, he joins an increasingly long list of aggrieved men who have been charged by east London police after claiming to have been maltreated. In recent weeks,

serious charges against two other men - Raphael Joseph and Glenford Lewis - have been dropped by the Crown Prosecution Service. Joseph had been charged with assault after officers were called to a fight in Stamford Hill at the end of August. A month earlier he had been arrested and charged with several driving offences. Joseph was convicted of those offences, but is now suing the police for assault and battery and false imprisonment, relating to this earlier arrest. The officers who arrested him deny they beat him up.

Glenford Lewis is also suing for damages, after the CPS offered no evidence against him, on serious drugs charges, at Snaresbrook Crown Court. The main prosecution witness, an officer who, Lewis alleges, planted a matchbox containing cocaine, during a search of his car, was 'too ill' to attend court. The officer suffers from a back problem, and was 'not physically capable of attending court,' Superintendent Roy Clark, from Dalston, told *City Limits*. Lewis' fingerprints were never found on the box, and he claims he was punched in the face, and threatened by officers.

The Hackney Community Defence Association, which has campaigned

for all three men, says the Lewis and Gordon cases raise 'extremely serious questions' about the policing of black communities. It is calling for officers who harass members of the public in this way to be dismissed.

Said a spokesperson: 'The police repeatedly claim they are concerned about their image in the community, but in reality, they do not take notice of the community's concern at police racism and violence, and continue to bring unwarranted charges against people as they go about their daily business.'

Bunch of MI5s

As Colin Wallace's allegations finally sunk in at Westminster last week, memories were being stirred, albeit on a more parochial level, of the way MI5 and Special Branch operate in London.

In 1986 Anne Doyle, an Irish woman, found herself being followed continually by members of Special Branch who broke into the women's refuge where she worked and stole papers belonging to her. Two cars which kept the women's refuge under surveillance were traced by *City Limits* to a mews garage in Mayfair, close to the Curzon Street headquarters of MI5. Surveillance experts confirmed that the operation had almost certainly been ordered by MI5.

Now Anne and her sister Nuala are being harassed again. Nuala, a young republican from Northern Ireland, arrived in London three weeks ago to stay with her sister. The Saturday before last the two sisters joined the Bloody Sunday march through London, walking the route with Dottie McGuinness from Sinn Fein, who spoke at the rally.

Anne first came to London from Northern Ireland in 1984. A long-time political activist, she worked for Camden Council's women's unit, helping to push through two resolutions calling for the repeal of the Prevention of Terrorism Act, and for an end to strip-searching in Armagh. But she went back to Ireland after 1986 'because I couldn't cope with what was happening. I lay low as far as politics was concerned.'

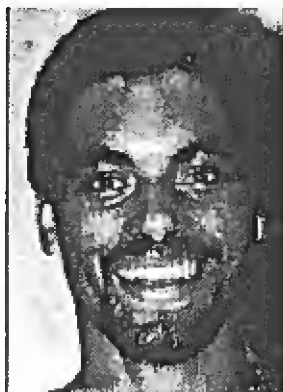
On Tuesday last week a number of unidentified men called at Anne's flat. Nuala, who was alone, refused to answer the door. This was followed by a series of anonymous phone calls. On one occasion there was silence at the other end, followed by the sound of a radio calling 'Roger 242.' Anne says she was also followed to a bus-stop by two men who watched her get on the bus and then walked away. She believes she recognised one of the men, and says they 'made it really obvious they were following me.'

Anne says the Special Branch harassment is following 'the same pattern as before.' Her case is being supported by the Troops Out Movement, which has relayed her experience to MPs, solicitors and trade unions. **QUENTIN McDERMOTT**

Mystery over 'cocaine' death

Mystery continues to surround the death of a young Afro-Caribbean man, Jamie Stewart, in Holloway police station last July.

An inquest last week recorded a



Jamie Stewart

verdict of death by misadventure, due to an 'excessive' overdose of cocaine. But no explanation was offered to the court as to how Stewart managed to ingest over 15 grammes of pure cocaine, which produced more than three times the lethal level of the drug in his blood. Stewart's family are convinced that vital evidence was withheld from the court and are considering legal action against the police.

Stewart died within an hour of being arrested for allegedly failing to produce driving documents. With him in the car were three minors. Two of them, aged ten and 14, were left at the side of the road to make their own way home.

The jury at last week's inquest heard that Stewart co-operated with the police. Despite this, the minors claimed, officers 'strip-searched' Stewart at the side of the road. The officers denied this, claiming that Stewart had been 'agitated and aggressive.' One of the arresting officers alleged that following an attempt to search him a violent struggle took

place at Holloway police station. During the struggle, which involved several officers, Stewart was said to have spat out the remains of a plastic bag with traces of cocaine. Stewart was escorted to a cell, and left lying face-down. He died shortly afterwards.

At Whittington Hospital, medical registrar Dr Nicola Simmonds says she was told Stewart had a history of epilepsy, had banged his head, and been placed in a cell. After heavy breathing was heard, his cell had been opened, and attempts had been made to resuscitate him. But the officer who spoke to the doctor denied having relayed this version of events.

Stewart's family feel that many questions remain unanswered. 'We still do not know how his hands and feet were mashed, nor how he got the bruises on his head and other parts of the body,' Jamie's sister Lee Stewart said. 'The police contradicted each other all the time, but were represented by four barristers, to our one. We do not feel that we received justice.' **RASHID MEER**

CL 8.2.90

Traffic wardens to run police station

DALSTON police station becomes a makeshift HQ for the borough's traffic wardens next month, when police officers move into their new £1.5 million "supernick" in Stoke Newington.

Traffic wardens will still provide a public counter service at Dalston, but once more suitable premises are found for them, the Victorian building in Dalston Lane is likely to be bulldozed.

The decision to shut the police station was confirmed officially by senior officers at last week's meeting of Hackney's police community consultative group.

But it brought an angry response from members who accused the police of ignoring the wishes of the community and "making a mockery" of the consultative process.

The group gave the thumbs down at its last meeting to a suggestion from Dalston top cop, Chief Supt Peter Twist, that traffic wardens instead of police officers should man a 24-hour public counter service, once Dalston ceases to function as an operational station.

But his deputy, Supt Roy Clarke, told last week's meeting it would be too costly for a

round-the-clock counter service to be manned by police officers.

Instead, traffic wardens will deal with inquiries and advise callers at the station, but the counter won't be manned at night or on Sundays.

There will, however, be a telephone installed outside the station with a direct link to the new Stoke Newington police station, he told the group.

"The whole thing makes a mockery of consultation with the group," said Green party representative, David Fitzpatrick, "because they haven't listened to what we told them."

"We were approached by Ridley Road Market Traders' Association and local residents who want a police presence to remain in an area of high crime."

Consultative group chairperson, Betty Blomfield, said she was "astounded" by the decision.

"Several people expressed real concern at what was being proposed at the last meeting because we didn't feel traffic wardens were

competent to deal with queries.

"We were given an assurance that they would be taken back, bearing in mind our objections and reasons. But without any further consultation it has been implemented."

Supt Clarke said the police management team who took the decision had been mindful of the views of the group, but it was not economic or efficient to keep the station open.

"It would have cost over £100,000 a year just to have a policeman man the counter, which means he wouldn't be available where we want him, out on the streets."

"The station is old and decrepit and located 200 yards from the southern part of our division when the new station is just half a mile away, and slap bang in the middle of it."

"It is a policy decision of the Met to reduce the number of police buildings, because we haven't got the money to maintain them. The more we spend on buildings the less we have to spend on policemen."

"I am certain we can supply a better service to our part of the borough from a single site."

Misadventure verdict will not stop family's probe demand Jamie Stewart inquest told of coke overdose

A MASSIVE cocaine overdose killed Jamie Stewart, the 22-year-old Stamford Hill electrician who died after being arrested by police for an alleged driving offence.

A jury at St Pancras Coroner's Court returned a verdict of misadventure, adding that his death was caused from a drug overdose.

But the verdict has failed to satisfy campaigners who are fighting for a full investigation into the circumstances surrounding his death.

Mr Stewart, of Wicklow House on the Stamford Hill Estate, was found unconscious in a cell at Holloway

police station in the early hours of July 1 last year. He was taken to the Whittington Hospital but was dead on arrival.

During the five-day inquest the jury heard that Mr Stewart was arrested when he could not prove ownership of the car he was driving. Witnesses to the arrest claimed he was strip-searched in the street.

But police claimed that Mr Stewart became violent while in the police station, and that they were forced to restrain him.

A youth who was with him and also taken to the police station, 16-year-old Adolph Modeste, claimed police had kicked and beaten Mr Stewart.

While at the police station Mr Stewart had vomited and a plastic bag was found on the floor which police at first thought was a piece of kebab.

Metropolitan Police toxicologist Raymond Fysh said he had found 7.8 grammes of pure cocaine in Mr Stewart's stomach, and a level of 75 milligrammes of cocaine in his blood. He said a lethal level is 25 milligrammes, and he estimated Mr Stewart had swallowed 15 grammes of pure cocaine, the highest level he had ever recorded.

After the inquest, the family's solicitor, Raju Bati, told the Gazette: "As far as the family were concerned the inquest was worthwhile in that it was their first opportunity to see for

themselves what the police had to say. "What was said has left a lot of questions unanswered."

Mr Bati alleged that the inquest had brought out a number of discrepancies in the police version of the events leading up to Mr Stewart's death.

He could not comment on what the family would do next. "The family hasn't had an opportunity to go through a period of mourning. Now that the inquest is over, they will need time before considering their next step."

"We will then consider all the possible options open to us. As far as we are concerned, it certainly isn't the end of the matter."

Minicab driver plans to sue after he's cleared of assault

'Police beat me up'

A MAN who claims the police beat him up was acquitted on all three charges when he appeared at Old Street Court on Wednesday last week.

Now the man, 51-year-old William Gordon, a minicab driver of Clepey Court, Hoxton, is planning to sue the police for assault.

Mr Gordon said: "Before this incident I thought the police were people who I could rely on or depend on if I had any difficulty or problem. But this has changed my outlook."

"For the first few weeks after this incident I couldn't eat or sleep properly. I never thought it could affect me so much." He added that he is now drawing up plans to sue the Metropolitan Police over the incident.

Mr Gordon claims he was attacked by police after turning from Reading Lane into Mare Street, Hackney, last November. Police say he turned too sharply but when they tried to wave him down he drove on.

They claim that when Mr Gordon stopped he attacked the two officers, punching one so hard he stumbled into the road and was almost hit by a passing bus.

But two people from nearby

by MARTIN TALBOT

shops say they witnessed the whole event, and they didn't see Mr Gordon throw a single punch.

Mr Gordon says the police attacked him, kneeling hard on his back and punching him again before throwing him into the back of a police van. A search of his car found a pen-knife with a four-inch blade, and he was later charged with possession of an offensive weapon.

Mr Gordon claims he used the knife for peeling oranges and he'd had it in the car for five years.

He was taken to Hackney police station and also charged with failing to stop on police instructions and assaulting a police officer. But when Mr Gordon appeared at Old Street last week, magistrates cleared him of all three charges.

A spokesperson for Hackney Community Defence Association said: "This is yet another example of every day violence that black people have to put up with from police officers with no means of redress."

He said the HCDA has no confidence in the Police Complaints Authority because investigations against police are carried out by other officers.

Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill, of

Hackney police, said he had no knowledge of the case and as far as he knew no official complaint had been made.

"If a complaint is made, you may rest assured it will be dealt with in accordance with the law," he added.

"I, and any other police officer, will not tolerate misbehaviour by colleagues. We as an organisation are committed to supplying quality service to the public and without detailed knowledge of any particular case I cannot comment any further."

The case strikes the latest in a series of blows against police in Hackney, coming just a week after Glenford Lewis, 33, of Dalston,



Changed outlook - William Gordon

claimed police had been beaten him up and framed him.

Last month Stoke Newington's Raphael Joseph, 50, announced plans to sue the Met, claiming he was being victimised by the police.

'Computer error' harassment allegation

The police have been accused of harassing a 19 year-old Hackney man – possibly as the result of a computer error. **QUENTIN McDERMOTT** reports.

Matthew Butler, who works as a security guard and spends much of his spare time helping as a Minister at his Baptist church, is due in court this week to face committal proceedings on charges of attempted robbery and malicious wounding. The charges arise out of an attack and attempted robbery of a man in Hatton Garden last October. Butler was charged following an identification parade. His supporters, who say there is no other evidence against him, regard it as a 'classic identification case'.

The Hackney Community Defence Association has written to the Crown Prosecution Service, drawing attention to several other incidents involving Butler and the police, which occurred towards the end of last year.

In late September five police officers called at his home in the early hours of the morning, hand-cuffed him, and took him to City Road police station. During the next five hours he was interviewed about a series of street robberies in Hackney. He was also asked questions about two of his brothers, both of whom have criminal records, but neither of whom see Butler regularly, or live with him and his parents. While he was being held, his home was searched, to no effect. He was told to return in October, and when he did so, was told he wouldn't be charged.

In early December, shortly after being arrested for the Hatton Garden incident, he was again visited by City Road officers and told to attend an identification parade. When he did



Matthew Butler

so, accompanied by his solicitor, he was told no parade had been arranged, no stand-ins contacted, and no witnesses brought to the station. 'They just said it was a wasted journey,' Butler said. 'They didn't even know there was going to be a parade – and yet they came to my house about eight different times in two days to remind me about it.'

In a later conversation with the officer in charge of the case, the HCDA alleges, Butler's solicitor was told he had not been considered a serious suspect. He was given no further explanation, or apology. Butler is planning to sue the police on this matter.

Within weeks, there were two more incidents. In the first, Butler, sitting in his car on night duty guarding premises in Enfield, was surrounded by officers and questioned. It was only after Butler, who was wearing his security guard's uniform, opened a door with his key that the Enfield officers were satisfied that he was not about to burgle the premises.

In the second incident, Butler was driving home from work when officers in a Panda car stopped him. Butler says he noticed the car parked as he left the premises. 'As soon as I passed they switched their lights on and came after me; they followed for about five minutes, then flashed me.' Butler was breathalysed – he hadn't been drinking – and sent on his way.

Martin Walker from the HCDA, said Butler 'has been an inspiration and an example to many of the black youth who attend his church. This is one of the first cases I've seen where I assume there's been a mix-up with the police computer, or the police's information,' he added. 'They've hounded him because, I assume, they believe he's some one else. It's bizarre – and a very serious matter.'

Matthew Butler himself, who was never in trouble with the police before last September, has clearly been shaken by the past few months' events. He says he stopped driving his car because he thought he was constantly being followed, and started suffering from depression. 'It's affected me a lot, he told CL.

CL 15. 2. 90

Property room that's known as Dixons of Dock Green!

Aladdin's cave of stolen stereos

IT'S known as Dixons of Dock Green down at Hackney police station.

It's a room full of stereos, amplifiers, TVs and computers, stacked up to the ceiling and looking remarkably like a high street electrical shop — except this hi-fi equipment is definitely not for sale.

It was stolen in dozens of burglaries on homes in Hackney and East London.

And it was found when police searched the home of one of a gang of housebreakers they recently nabbed.

"It sounds incredible, but all this lot was stored

by **RUSS LAWRENCE**

in a tiny flat," said Det Con Tim Smales.

"It's a wonder the floor didn't collapse with the weight of it.

"What we recovered is just the gear the gang had problems finding buyers for. There are record decks remaining from stack and midi hi-fi systems, so you can assume that the other parts of the systems have been sold off as separates."

Now police want to trace the rightful owners so they can return the property to them.

Detectives say the burglaries stretch back to November of last year. Many were carried out on homes in Homerton, around the Kingsmead Estate, and in the Victoria Park area. But the gang also operated as far afield as Walthamstow, Leyton and even Ilford.

"The gang stripped houses clean, taking clothing, jewellery and video recorders as well as the hi-fi equipment," added Det Con Smales.

"None of the recovered property is identifiable, but if the owners had marked them with special ultra-violet pens they would have stood a better chance of getting them back again."

Anyone who thinks property belonging to them may be among the haul should contact Hackney Crimedesk on 488 7263 to see the property, which will be at City Road police station.



● Pc Phillip Mockett in the Aladdin's cave of stolen loot.

HG 16.2.90

Fly by night

Two black members of the Hackney Community Defence Association have been fined £10 for flyposting. Hackney officers brought the charges after Janet Clarke and Tony Pryce were found sticking up posters advertising January's third annual 'We Remember' procession and rally, in honour of people who have, allegedly, died or been badly injured in the custody of Hackney's police.

Flyposting is not in itself an arrestable offence. However, under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act officers can arrest anyone if they are not satisfied with the address they give. The defendants complained that not only were they arrested, but they were not invited by the police to take the poster down, or consider making amends to the property's owner, as the law specifies. The owner, through an agent, said he wouldn't have prosecuted, accepted the defendants' apology and refused the £10 costs offered in compensation.

The HCDA will not appeal, but says it believes its posters were targeted because of their nature: 'To our knowledge they don't prosecute the mass of commercial, pop posters which are put up around Mare Street; everyone knows there's a flyposting "Mafia". Yet our poster was specifically about deaths in custody.'

CL 22.2.90

Race fears fail to stop march

A MARCH planned by the family of a stabbed schoolboy will go ahead tomorrow (Saturday) despite demands by councillors and race groups that police should ban it.

Police reinforcements are being drafted in to Bethnal Green to stop violent clashes between racists and counter-demonstrators.

The march has been organised by the family of 17-year-old John Stoner who was knifed in a classroom attack two weeks ago by a group of Asian youths at Morpeth School.

The march from the school to Bethnal Green police station had been intended as a protest about civil liberties and the rise of racial hatred.

But the right wing British National Party has used the march to peddle its race-hate message by delivering leaflets to homes claiming it was the latest in a string of attacks on whites by Asians.

Cllr Steve Charters of the Globe Town Neighbourhood said: "It has become a platform for racist activity and I have called on the police to ban it."

But a spokesperson for Bethnal Green police said they were mindful it was in a racially sensitive area, but the march would go ahead.

Assault case dropped

A CHARGE of assaulting a police officer, brought against former Chelsea and Reading soccer player Paul Canoville, 27, was discontinued at Highbury Magistrates' Court.

Canoville, of Wrens Park House, Wrens Park Estate, Warwick Grove, Upper Clapton, had been charged with assaulting Pc Alan Kieman at Victorian Grove, Stoke Newington, on May 15.

He is also charged with obstructing the highway on the same occasion and on this charge he was remanded on bail to appear at Wells Street Magistrates' Court on April 12.

44 23.2.90

Once in a while to find owners of stolen gear

WANTED - people wanted to help police with their inquiries by coming forward to claim their treasured possessions stolen when burglars struck. An Aladdin's cave of jewellery and camera equipment has been set up at City Road police station, recovered from burglars' booty.

"We have got a lot of stuff which we have got over the last six weeks," said Det Sgt Paul Phillips of the crime squad. "Burglars tend to go for jewellery as they know it is difficult to identify. Some of the rings we have got are worth several thousands of pounds."

In one haul he found a Hackney Gazette cutting, dated September 2, 1988, about a raid on Vallens Jewellers and pawnbrokers in Dalston Lane when knife-wielding raiders snatched £120,000 in gold and silver.

"So if anyone had pawned anything there at the time of that robbery, we might have some of their belongings. Some of the more unusual pieces we've got include a ring with the initials BRG on it and a watch with a dollar face," said DS Phillips.

If anyone wants to look at the property at the police station in Shepherdess Walk, Hoxton, they should make an appointment by ringing City Road crimesdesk on 488 5311.

Drunk 'walked into my path' - police van driver tells inquest

AN elderly man knocked down and killed by a police van answering an emergency call was so drunk he had been refused a drink at a nearby pub shortly before the accident.

Walthamstow Coroner's Court heard that Horace Bugby, a 64-year-old widower, of Cavell Street, Stepney, died of multiple injuries after the horrific accident involving a police Sherpa van on the evening of December 1 at Wood Street, Walthamstow.

Pc Duncan Broadbent, from Walthamstow police station, said in a written statement that Mr Bugby walked straight into his path as he drove past with his blue light flashing. There was no siren fitted to the van.

Pc Broadbent said the van was answering a call for assistance from another officer at a nearby pub.

When he realised Mr Bugby was intending to

walk out into the road, he braked and tried to steer the van to the right to avoid him but "without looking Mr Bugby walked briskly out straight into my path."

Tatool Tatoolian, manager of the White Swan pub in Wood Street, said Mr Bugby came into the pub just before closing time.

His speech was slurred, he could not walk properly and he was refused a drink, said Mr Tatoolian.

Pathologist Dr Peter Vaneris said Mr Bugby sustained severe head injuries.

The pathologist added that the blood alcohol level was "just about the level at which alcohol poisoning can occur."

The jury returned an open verdict by a five to two majority.

No decision about possible criminal proceedings against Pc Broadbent has yet been taken, Ps Keith Plant told the court.

New crime crackdown nabs burglars

HACKNEY cops were cock-a-hoop this week following the success of a special crime crackdown.

Around 30 plain clothes officers took to the streets for a month in an attempt to round up burglars.

They succeeded in catching and charging 51 burglars - twice as many as they get in a normal month.

And, in addition, they caught another 123 criminals in the act of dealing drugs, robbery and handling stolen goods.

Some of the special squad targeted areas where there had been many burglaries, while others trailed known criminals whom they believed to be intent on crime.

Sgt Trevor Smith, who was among the squad, told the Gazette: "This initiative was an overwhelming success in terms of the number of people arrested for criminal offences."

"It shows our commitment to providing an efficient service to the people of Hackney in preventing and detecting offences against property."

Other crackdowns are planned for later in the year. Hackney police have made reducing burglaries a priority for 1990.

Police telephone switchboards have been jammed with calls from people wanting to know if their stolen property has been found.

Their interest follows a Gazette article two weeks ago on a stolen property display now on show at City Road police station. Viewing, by appointment only, can be done via Hackney Crimesdesk (488 7211).

HC 2-3-90



● The picket outside Bacton Fashions before Monday's incident.

Police hurt during factory picket

FOUR policemen were injured in a scuffle outside Bacton Fashions clothing factory in Stoke Newington Road at about 7.30 on Monday night.

They were among 20 officers from Bow's Territorial Support Group policing a picket outside the factory where eight workers have been on strike for three weeks over union rights.

The incident left Pc Dave Miles with a gash above his eye and Pc Dean Harris with concussion. Both needed hospital treatment and were on sick leave as the Gazette went to press.

The demonstrators from the picket later held a vigil outside Dalston police sta-

tion where four men were being held in connection with the incident.

Three men and a 16-year-old youth from Hackney appeared before Highbury magistrates on Tuesday. Haydar Guccuk, 26, of Sledon Road, Hackney, Sakar Rizvan, 25, of Wycombe Road, Tottenham, Tekin Kartal, 22, of Woodford, and the youth are charged with violent disorder. Kartal and Guccuk are also charged with assaulting a police officer, occasioning him actual bodily harm, and the youth faces a further charge of malicious wounding. They were granted bail and next appear on Tuesday, March 13.



● Demonstrators march along Bethnal Green Road. "The good sense of the majority of marchers prevented a small minority from creating a nasty situation," according to Bethnal Green's top cop Chief Superintendent John Grieve.

Youths charged with murder bid after racism marches

TWO nasty race-hate incidents marred Saturday's largely peaceful and rival marches through the streets of Bethnal Green and Spitalfields.

Three Bangladeshi youths were remanded in custody charged with attempted murder following an attack on Terence Swinney, 35, in Harford Street, Stepney.

Mr Swinney, from Bow, was driving along Harford Street with his wife and two children when the incident happened. He was taken to the London Hospital, Whitechapel, suffering from multiple stab wounds.

On Saturday evening, Ahmed Ali, 28, was pelted with bottles and metal

sticks when his grocer's shop in Redchurch Street, Spitalfields, was attacked by 15 white youths.

He suffered cuts and bruises to the head and was released after treatment at the London Hospital. Police are anxious to track down the gang.

Extra police had been drafted into Bethnal Green as it was feared that members of the British National Party would hijack a demonstration by white residents protesting at the stabbing of 17-year-old Morpeth schoolboy John Stoner by Asian schoolmates.

More than 200 marchers assembled at Morpeth School, Morpeth Street, and walked through the streets of Be-

thnal Green to Bethnal Green police station where a deputation handed in a petition calling for more protection for white youngsters.

Less than a mile away in Brick Lane over 200 Bangladeshis staged a rival demonstration that also passed off peacefully thanks, according to Bethnal Green's top cop, Chief Supt John Grieve, to the "good sense of the people of Brick Lane who policed themselves".

Parents, teachers, pupils and union leaders have joined together in calling for a "anti-fascist rally" at 2pm on Sunday in Altub Ali Park, Whitechapel High Street.

'Sweatshop' protest ends in violence

The heavy hand of the law continues to haunt east London. On Monday last week, fighting broke out between Territorial Support Group officers and demonstrators picketing a Turkish 'sweatshop' factory, Bacton Fashions, in Stoke Newington Road, as officers attempted to escort manager Mustafa Dill, out of the building. Four officers were injured, and four men later appeared in court charged with violent disorder offences, and assault. The demonstration was in support of 20 workers who were allegedly sacked for defending union rights. The sackings follow concerted efforts by the Transport & General Workers Union to recruit workers in east end 'sweatshops' into the union's textiles branch. The demonstrators mounted an all-night picket of Dalston police station, following Monday's incident, and have leafleted other 'sweatshops' in the area. On Tuesday Dill announced he was shutting his fac-

tory.

The police have also been accused of breaking up an ambulance workers benefit gig at the Unity Club, in Dalston, ten days ago. The incident occurred as the headliners, 2 Lost Sons, were half-way through their final encore. The band's manager Mark Williams told CL: 'It was incredible. Someone kicked the door in on the side of the stage, and I went flying. The drummer was pushed off his stool, and they threw his sticks away. They all just piled in.' Williams says the police threatened to confiscate the band's equipment if they didn't stop immediately. But club manager Peter Snell feels the band's complaints are a little overstated. He says the police were 'quite understanding', that they had dealt with a small group of rowdies earlier in the evening, and returned because they were not aware that the event was operating under proper club rules.

QUENTIN McDERMOTT

CL 8.3.90

Park shut off after policewoman is attacked

POLICE are hunting the vicious attacker who slashed a brave woman cop when she surprised him lurking in bushes in Victoria Park.

WPC Michaela Fellows, 23, chased the attacker through the park in the direction of Approach Road, Bethnal Green, but gave up and radioed for help when she realised her face was streaming with blood from two deep gashes.

Police quickly shut off the park but a search

with dogs and helicopters failed to find any trace of the attacker.

Det Inspector Brian Moore, who is leading the hunt, told the Gazette: "The attack on WPC Fellows was totally unprovoked. We don't know what sort of weapon he used but a search discovered a screwdriver and gloves near the scene."

WPC Fellows was making a routine patrol through the park at 7.40 pm on Monday night

when the incident happened. She challenged him and he lashed out making two three-inch cuts on her face.

The incident lasted a matter of seconds. WPC Fellows says the attacker is of Latin or Asian appearance, aged about 25 and about 6ft tall. He had a large moustache and was wearing a leather or nylon jacket.

Contact Det Insp Moore on 488 5381.

EXTRA police will be drafted into the East End for the second weekend running as a group called the Rights for Whites Campaign march around the streets of Bethnal Green on Sunday.

The group are calling for more police action to "defend the white community" after the stabbing of Morpeth schoolboy John Stoner and Bow man Terry Swinney who were both involved in incidents with Asian youths.

But Bethnal Green and Stepney MP Peter Shore says the march is being used by the ultra-right wing British National Party to promote its chances in May's local government elections.

Upsetting

He told the Gazette: "'Rights for Whites' is a slogan used by the BNP. I think it would be wrong to ban the march. The police seem to think they can keep it under control, but it is upsetting to see the resurgence of the BNP again."

It is rumoured that BNP candidates will be standing in wards in Bethnal Green and Stepney with high Bangladeshi populations.

A spokesperson for the march organisers confirmed the ultra-right connection.

"It's part BNP and part local people," he said. He would not comment on the route of the march. Police are anxious to keep demonstrators away from the large Bangladeshi populations of Brick Lane and Spitalfields.

BNP link as police get ready for 'whites march'

Workers Against Racism have taken up the case of the three Bangladeshis charged with the stabbing of Terry Swinney in Ben Jonson Road, Stepney, two weeks ago.

Malik Miah, Adbul Hamid and a juvenile who cannot be named have been charged with the attempted murder of Mr Swinney, 35, but WAR are co-ordinating the Stepney Three Campaign demanding their release.

Yesterday (Thursday), members of the Stepney Three Campaign picketed Thames Magistrates Court in Bow Road where the three teenagers were due to appear facing charges of attempted murder.

HC 9.3.90

THE UNACCEPTABLE FACE OF PROTEST

Thatcher condemns
London's worst
poll tax clashes



Some of the crowd tangle with police

MRS THATCHER today condemned the violence at Hackney's anti-poll tax demonstration last night and laid the blame firmly on Left-wing extremists.

The Prime Minister said anything intimidating or violent was "absolutely contradictory to democracy".

Highly-organised Trotskyite Socialist Workers Party agitators turned London's largest poll tax rebellion into an orgy of violence, destruction and looting.

In the worst night of anarchy yet experienced in the bitter campaign, hard-core "flying pickets" from as far afield as Liverpool, Glasgow and Cardiff, some of them masked, left a mile-long trail of broken glass and smashed shop displays through the heart of Hackney.

Speaking in Glasgow, Mrs Thatcher said: "I'm afraid it's one of a series (of demonstrations) which we believe to be organised by Militant.

"As you know, it is not the way

by Colin Adamson

to conduct affairs at all. Legislation has been through Parliament and any conduct intimidating or violent is absolutely contradictory to democracy. People can demonstrate if they do so peacefully.

"Of course, they are going for some of the councils which are setting very high community charges.

"Some of them are Labour councils. They have something to grouse about but if they are going to protest they should do so in an orderly way," said the Prime Minister, who was visiting Glasgow's new £100 million St Enoch Centre shopping centre.

Militant Tendency supporters, blamed up to now for much of the violence at poll tax demonstrations, were in evidence early on in Hackney, but faded away when the worst trouble began.

What started as a rumbustious 4000-strong protest outside the town hall quickly degenerated into a full-scale bloody riot last night, with the SWP tacticians orchestrating every move.

By the time Hackney Council

had set a poll tax of £199, all thoughts of democratic political opposition had vanished.

A young policewoman lay semi-conscious on the pavement, her helmet smashed by a brick hurled from an overhead walkway. She was led to an ambulance bleeding heavily from a broken nose.

Twenty-nine of her colleagues, who stood their ground against mass invasion on the town hall steps and battled to clear the charging mob from the streets, were felled by a barrage of rocks, full beer cans, smoke bombs, fireworks, coins, and heavy wooden sticks attached to SWP placards.

Two WP-cs and two P-cs were taken to the Homerton Hospital for treatment and later released. Another 30 received treatment from the divisional medical officer for minor cuts and bruises. Scotland Yard said the demonstrators' strength was estimated at about 5000.

Up to 60 shops on Mare Street and Narrow Way had their fronts smashed and dozens were looted.

Fires were started in dustbins, pavements were torn up and the

Continued on Page 2 Col 4



A mask hides the face of one protester

EVENING STANDARD

9 3.90

time for something else today—the big clear-up.

On the morning after Hackney's poll tax-fixing night, devastation replaced the familiar detritus outside the fast food bar.

Instead of burger boxes and milk shake cartons, there was a pile of grey concrete slabs. Close by lay shards of thick blue glass.

The stones had been hurled repeatedly at McDonald's windows, failing to break the specially-toughened glass, but creating a fantastic, frightening spider's web as it shattered.

Inside, at the height of last night's 30-minute looting and wrecking rampage, children, their parents and staff covered behind locked doors.

One customer said: "We just heard thump, thump, thump, and it seemed to go on for ever. Everyone was

very frightened."

McDonald's faces a bill for at least £25,000 for the glass alone; the emotional damage inflicted by the mob may be much worse.

The gang only ceased their attack when the windows failed to break, taking out their frustration indiscriminately along Mare Street's narrow shopping parade.

Few businesses escaped. The 500 or so marauders attacked chain stores, building societies, book shops, electrical shops, a butcher's and a baker's. If there had been a candlestickmaker's, they would have wrecked that too.

Steve Davis, the 32-year-old owner of Hackney Fruit Stores, needed a police escort to reach his shop.

When he arrived, he looked on incredulously as about 40 people hurled

stones, bricks, pieces of wood and anything they could get hold of at anything that seemed to be a target.

They couldn't break through Steve's metal shutters. But what they could do is smash the plate-glass window of a chartered surveyor's next door, which had nothing worth stealing.

Down the street Steve's friend the bookseller had thousands of pounds-worth of books chucked from the shelves. In shops like Radio Rentals and DER, hi fi and TVs were just asking to be taken.

The mille of violence

Continued from Page 1

concrete slabs used as missiles, and a police Metro patrol car was overturned.

Some armed with riot shields staged counter-charges against breakaway groups of up to 200 stone-throwing rioters, almost all in their late teens or early twenties.

Mounted officers were also called into the battle which raged from 8.55pm, when police cleared the square in front of the town hall, until well after 10.30pm.

Senior officers had to use helicopters to direct ambulances to the scene as both police and protesters suffered head injuries from the hail of missiles.

When the worst excesses took place, particularly the looting, the distinctive black and white SWP placards

A 23-year-old East London man was fined £40 with £10 costs today after admitting a charge of disorderly behaviour during last night's violent poll tax demonstration in Hackney.

Brian Elias, of Alnsworth Road, Chingford, swore at police officers and behaved aggressively outside Hackney Town Hall, Old Street magistrates were told.

bearing the message, "Break the Tory Poll Tax. Don't Collect, Don't Pay", could be seen in the crowds.

The damage bill is expected to run into tens of thousands of pounds.

The police chief in charge of operations at Hackney last night today said he was convinced that the riot was engineered by political activists.

"I am absolutely confident of that," said Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill. "There was a significant minority of persons who were agitators and activists who had gone along with no interest whatsoever in Hackney's community charge. Their sole interest was in attacking police lines."

He said that of the rioters arrested last night, over 40 per cent came from outside the borough. "From my own observations and from those of others, it is quite clear that there were people in the crowd hell-bent on creating trouble," he said.

Of the 30 police officers injured last night, all have now been released from hospital, although Chief Supt Mulvihill said that some would be off duty for several days as a result of their injuries.

"There were clearly a number of people who attended a meeting simply to attack the police."

"A lot of local people were there and some of those may have been responsible for the attacks."

"But other local people tried to stop the violence and were stopped from doing so by others in the crowd who were just out to create trouble."

Chief Superintendent Mulvihill denied that police had been too slow to respond to the looting gang which ran amok in a shopping parade.

He said: "People who criticise the response do not have my overview of the situation."

Hackney Council leader John McCafferty said there

Police ensure Haringey peace

POLICE outnumbered demonstrators today as Haringey Council made a second attempt to fix its poll tax.

Only about 50 protesters were at the Civic Centre Wood Green, as councillors re-convened their meeting.

It was adjourned at 2am on Tuesday after an invasion of the chamber.

The ruling Labour group aimed to introduce a poll tax of £572.89 which was 11p inside the Government's recommendation.

had been a "popular protest" but he did not condone violence.

He added: "I think it is quite clear the protestors were a cross section of the population. Obviously, if there is a situation of disruption there will be people who will join in to add to the disruption."

During campaigning in the Mid-Staffordshire by-election today, both Home Secretary David Waddington and Shadow environment secretary Bryan Gould condemned the violence in Hackney.

Diane Abbott, MP for Hackney North and Stoke Newington, today accused Mrs Thatcher of being the "real urban terrorist" behind last night's riots. Ms Abbott put down a House of Commons motion denouncing the Prime Minister for causing the violence outside the Town Hall.



A policewoman hit by a brick in Hackney holds her head as, below, protesters wave extremist banners



EVENING STANDARD

9.3.90



The front line... Police hold back anti-poll tax demonstrators last night during violent scenes outside Hackney town hall, east London PHOTOGRAPH: ROBIN MAYES

PM blames militancy on Labour

Alan Travis
Political Correspondent

MRS Thatcher yesterday tried to link the spectre of "militant violence" surrounding poll tax protests with Labour.

Moving the argument away from the benefits of the community charge, the Prime Minister — orchestrated by her party chairman Kenneth Baker — yesterday tried to link Labour MPs to the town hall demonstrations.

"They are precisely the same kind of violence we have seen before at Grunwick, in the coal strike and at Wapping, and they are a negation of democracy," she told the Commons.

Sensing a chink of light in the poll tax argument, Conservative MPs ignored condemnation of the violent incidents from every section of the Parliamentary Labour Party, ranging from the Labour leader, Neil Kinnock, to MP Dave Nellist, a Militant supporter, who said the All Britain Anti-poll Tax Federation "does not organise, advocate or condone the violence".

Mrs Thatcher seized on the alleged statement by 28 Labour MPs that they would support a campaign of non-payment, and demanded Mr Kinnock disown them. But three say they intend to pay the tax, and nearly half do not support a campaign. One of the 28 — Tony Benn, MP for Chesterfield — claimed Britain was "witnessing the first major civil disobedience campaign since the Suffragettes". He urged Labour to defend those who decided not to pay, and pledge itself to an amnesty.

Labour leaders oppose a campaign of mass non-payment, saying it is dangerous to encourage people in financial difficulties to take on a debt which in England and Wales

can lead to prison. However, 10 Plaid Cymru councillors in Neil Kinnock's Islwyn constituency announced they would not pay.

Pressure is still mounting on the Conservative Party. The local government minister, David Hunt, is receiving daily delegations from aggrieved Conservative councillors. The poll tax has split the ruling Conservative group on Torquay council, Devon, with seven voting against a tax of £395. Last night, the Conservative-led Barnet council met in Mrs Thatcher's constituency of Finchley, north London, to set a poll tax rate £60 above the Government's £278 national average target.

Negotiations between the Department of Environment and the local authority associations over the level of next year's Whitehall grants to councils start today. The councils are expected to blame rising poll tax bills on the Government's failure to get its figures right last year, to the tune of £2.4 billion. That is the minimum extra figure Mr Patten needs to win from the Treasury in the coming Cabinet battle over local authority spending to peg average poll tax bills at £380 — £100 above the government estimate.

Mrs Thatcher has promised that the negotiations will consider any fresh evidence about the success or failure of Standard Spending Assessments — the mechanism which has pushed up poll tax bills in the Conservative shires.

Mr Baker produced in a press conference bar charts showing that many more Labour councils were overspending than Conservative councils. Labour's campaigns co-ordinator, Jack Cunningham, proffered a simple explanation — there are many more Labour councils in the country.

Details, page 41 Politics, page 2

57 held as London poll tax protest erupts into riot

Stephen Cook, Celia Locks,
Paul Webster and Paul Myers

RIOTERS smashed a half-mile swathe through Hackney, east London, last as police cleared 4,000-5,000 demonstrators from outside the town hall, where a poll tax of £199, one of the highest in the country, was set.

Fifty-seven people were arrested, and police and demonstrators injured by flying bottles and stones. Four police officers were taken to hospital. A police car was overturned, and shops were looted.

There were protests outside other council meetings in London and the south of England.

In Swindon, an effigy of Mrs Thatcher was burned, but there were no other reports of large-scale violence.

Earlier yesterday, Hackney council staff walked out in protest at security measures taken by the Labour council, which called in a private firm to board up windows and some doors in preparation for the meeting.

The police decision to clear the square in front of the town hall came after 90 minutes of increasingly ugly skirmishes between police and some of the crowd who hurled bottles, cans and lumps of wood.

One man had his head gashed by a flying bottle, and a young policewoman was

clutching her eye. Much of the violence directed at the police appeared to come from groups of anarchists, who roamed through the demonstrators enticing them to charge police ranks.

Staves from Militant and Socialist Worker banners were among missiles launched at the police, many of which hit demonstrators behind the police lines.

About 200 youths broke up paving stones and smashed the windows of Woolworth, McDonalds, Marks & Spencer, BHS and the Midland Bank. Shops were looted, and a 300-yard stretch at the top of the main street was left strewn with glass and rubble.

The riot fizzled out near Hackney police station, where a police car was turned over and its windows smashed. Police horses emerged from behind the station to clear the last of the demonstrators.

In the boarded-up town hall, the council set its rate — £202 above the government guideline — amid heckling from the public gallery. A bag of flour burst on the floor of the chamber.

Afterwards, Commander John Purnell, the most senior officer at the scene, said: "We brought in reinforcements and deployed our resources as best we could, but some elements took advantage of the situation to cause the damage. You've just got to look round at the kind of people in this

Police at Swindon called for reinforcements after 30 people, from a crowd of 500, tried to break down the doors of the council offices.

In north London, a man was taken to hospital with a broken arm after a car ploughed through 500 protesters demonstrating outside Camden town hall. The poll tax was set at £571, a £21 reduction on an earlier council estimate.

In west London, more than 1,000 people crowded into Hillingdon Council's civic centre. Some watched proceedings on closed circuit television in committee rooms. Stewards carrying two-way radios monitored the number of people entering the building to prevent a recurrence of the disorder which stopped the council from fixing its charge last week.

In nearby Labour-controlled Ealing council, where the Labour leader, Neil Kinnock, lives, the poll tax was set at £435.

Picketers were almost outnumbered by the police guard at Hendon town hall as the prime minister's local authority, Barnet council, set a poll tax of £338, £15 over its government target.

Two masked men in Gloucestershire held up a pub claiming they needed the money to pay their poll tax. The men threatened the barman with a knife, and apologised, telling him: "We've only done this because we can't afford to pay the poll

GUARDIAN 9.3.90

MOB RULE



Picture: DYLAN CONNELL

by TONY GALLAGHER

THIS is the mindless face of the poll tax savagery that turned London streets into a war zone last night.

A thug wields a torn-up road sign as he leads an attack on heavily outnumbered police.

At least 30 officers were

5,000 take to streets in looting orgy

hurt, four seriously, as 5,000 demonstrators ran amok after Hackney council decided its tax rate.

Scores of shops were looted and local people locked themselves inside their homes during the two-hour mob rampage.

Mounted police and officers in full riot gear, including women, baton charged the crowds and snatch squads tried to grab ringleaders. At least 57 people were arrested.

Many demonstrators were Militant supporters from outside the area.

One police sergeant said: "They

have used the tax as an excuse for an orgy of looting and rioting.

"I have not seen anything like this since the Brixton riots years ago."

SLD leader Paddy Ashdown, who was escorted to safety after hundreds of demonstrators broke into a meeting nearby, said: "I have seen scenes

like this in Belfast, and I was as frightened then as now. This type of violence is appalling and does nothing to further the anti poll tax cause."

Both Margaret Thatcher and Neil Kinnock condemned the rioters.

The violence flared after Hackney
Turn to Page 2

TODAY 9.3.90

5,000 run amok as mob rules

From Page 1

council agreed a £499 community charge. A 100-strong force of police, standing six deep, kept demonstrators away from the Town Hall during the meeting.

In frustration, more than 1,000 staged a sit-down protest. Police dispersed them and formed a new cordon a quarter of a mile away.

Suddenly the fury boiled over. Crowds regrouped in side streets to launch attacks.

More than 200 police reinforcements, including women officers, were rushed in and thrown into the front line under a hail of broken bottles, stones and bricks.

Precinct

Hordes more protesters swarmed into the Mare Street pedestrian precinct, breaking every window in sight.

TVs and videos worth thousands of pounds were stolen from a looted rental shop.

The local McDonalds was "smashed to bits", said police, and 40 other stores attacked.

The owner of a wrecked card shop said: "I can't understand the mentality of people who do this. Who do they end up hurting? What do they gain from it?"

Peter Adams, 46, said: "I saw a woman running off with a wedding dress. An electrical shop was



FLASHPOINT: Police clash with violent protesters surging forward in a pitched battle

cleared out. There was nothing left.

"I saw somebody breaking up paving slabs for others to smash windows."

Lee Brooks, 21, told how he saw the demonstration disintegrate into a bloody orgy of violence and looting.

He said: "A crowd of 200 were running down the High Street smashing windows for absolutely no reason."

"Everyone was screaming and shouting and it was very frightening. The protesters outside the town hall were

all ages, even mothers with children. But the looters were all young.

"At first the police did not even realise what was happening."

"Then finally the back-up teams began to arrive and the mounted police came and the crowds dispersed."

Post Office worker John McCrody, 51, said: "These people are turning it into their own war. They don't come from round here."

"They just turned up to have a go at police."

■ Night the thugs took over: Pages 4 & 5

Courts ready for 3.5m poll rebels

SPECIAL courts will be set up to cope with an expected 3.5 million poll tax defaulters.

Ministers will shortly give secret instructions on dealing with non-payers.

Many areas have already booked courts to cope with the revolt, set to be the big-

gest challenge to law and order faced by the Government.

Police in some inner-city areas are preparing for riots when people are forced to pay the tax.

Premier Margaret Thatcher compared this week's protests to violence during the miners' strike.

NIGHT

MILLIONS of TV viewers watched in horror as a police constable was mercilessly battered by hate-filled thugs.

The officer is desperately trying to hold back the baying mob when suddenly he is fighting to protect his life as punches rain down on him.

For one terrifying moment viewers see him pulled forward and clubbed by a crop-haired militant who has obviously arrived armed, then escapes into the crowd.

The officer turns on a

by JIM GALLAGHER and GARY MORGAN

second man who tries twice to batter him in the face.

Undaunted, the brave constable holds on to the attacker who is screaming with hatred.

But two other friends of the thug join the fray and lash out.

With a wave of strength the officer hauls one of his attackers over the wall and, after kneeling his assailant, brings him under control.



ATTACK: The officer's helmet is knocked from his head during a charge by 20 screaming yobs



PUNCH: The Pc tries to grab one of the yobs when a fist suddenly smashes him in the face



CLUBBED: A man appears from the crowd and batters the officer's head with a wooden cosh



BRAVE: The bruised and bloodied PC hauls one of his vicious attackers over the wall

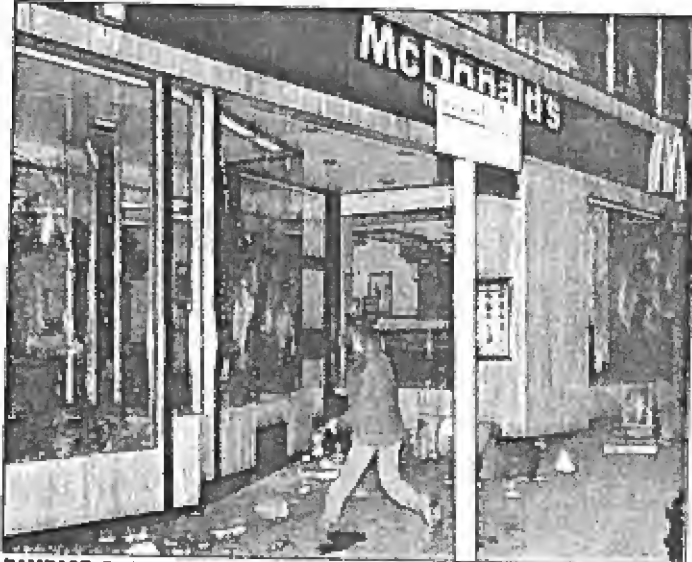
TODAY 9.3.90

THE THUGS TOOK OVER



RIOT ZONE: A squad car lies on its side outside Hackney police station after being tipped over by mobs from a poll tax demo

Pictures: STEVE BURTON and LEE BROOKS



RAMPAGE: Cartons litter the street as looters smash their way into a restaurant



CALL OF THE WILD: Baying protesters push toward police outside the town hall

TODAY

9.3.90

Poll tax protest turns to rioting and looting

By Ben Fenton, Philip Sherwell and Martin Newland

MOUNTED POLICE broke up a mob that had looted shops and attacked a police station in Hackney, east London, last night after a poll tax protest by up to 5,000 people blew up into a riot, with running battles between officers and demonstrators. Scotland Yard said 57 people were arrested and more than 30 police officers hurt in the worst violence yet seen in the campaign against the community charge. Shops were raided after the windows of virtually every building for 500 yards were kicked in or smashed with dustbins and bricks.

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Editorial Comment — P20

Senior police officers described the scene as "chaotic", and reinforcements arrived from the Territorial Support Group.

A policeman said protesters standing on a railway bridge straddling Mare Street threw bricks on to officers passing beneath.

Four policemen were treated in hospital, the worst suffering from a broken nose. Four of those arrested were not from the Hackney area.

A sergeant involved in one of the baton charges, said: "If it had been a peaceful protest they could have protested all day long but it is a different story when they are throwing bottles, bricks, placards and sticks."

During the looting later, the youths, many wearing hoods and with scarves across their faces, were thought to be from a different group.

The gang dispersed as mounted police and vans carrying reinforcements arrived. However, groups of youths roamed the area into the early hours as scores of burglar alarms continued to ring.

Three hours after the violence began, police in vans were still patrolling the back streets around the town hall, on occasion arresting people.

Earlier, organisers of the protest said the council had adopted heavy-handed security measures, including guards with dobermann pinschers.

Mr Paddy Ashdown, the leader of the Liberal Democrats, who had been at Hackney town hall for an earlier meeting, called the protesters a "rabble" and likened the violence to the streets of Northern Ireland.

He said: "I condemn this mindless brutality. I have seen scenes like this in Belfast and was as frightened then as now to be caught in the middle of it all."

There was also serious trouble during the second attempt by Thamesdown council in Swindon, Wiltshire, to levy a poll tax of £336.

At Camden, north London, 400 people chanted outside the town hall but the meeting was delayed as the ruling Labour group met to consider savings to cut the expected charge level of £555.

Almost 500 people laid siege to Hillingdon civic centre, west London, where councillors were also trying for the second time to set a charge.

At Ealing, in west London, councillors were jeered by 400 people and covered in paper as they arrived to set a community charge of £435.

Barnet council, in north London, which covers Mrs Thatcher's Finchley constituency, set a poll tax of £338.

Televisions from an electrical store were looted and broken, a patrol car outside the police station was overturned and rubbish bins were set alight.

Mr Peter Adams, 46, a Hackney resident, said: "I saw a woman running off with a wedding dress. A local electrical shop was cleared out. There was nothing left. People were running off with videos."

"I saw somebody breaking up paving slabs for others to throw to smash windows," he added.

Mr Adil Salahi, a shop owner, said: "We were absolutely terrified. They moved down past the shops throwing dustbins through windows."

Mounted police had to charge a mob of several hundred that gathered outside Hackney police station and threw missiles through windows.

Earlier, police guarding Hackney town hall, where councillors were trying to set a poll tax of £499, fought with demonstrators at close quarters and conducted a series of baton charges after they were pelted with stones, bottles and other missiles.

About 2,000 protesters had gathered to oppose the community charge, but it was a hard core of about 200 that began attacks on officers that lasted for more than two hours. Police reinforcements were called from other parts of London when about 1,000 protesters staged a sit-down demonstration.

At 8.30, traffic in Mare Street, Hackney's main thoroughfare, came to a standstill as the demonstration spilled on to the road and 20 policemen came under a hail of missiles as they tried to clear the street.

At this stage, senior police officers decided to remove all the protesters from in front of the town hall. The crowd had swelled from 1,000 at 7pm to 4,000 two hours later.

A line of police moved the crowd both north and south along Mare Street. Scuffles broke out between officers and demonstrators.

Opposite the town hall, the crush became so intense that people had to scramble over a fence to escape. Children brought to the rally by their parents were handed over to safety.

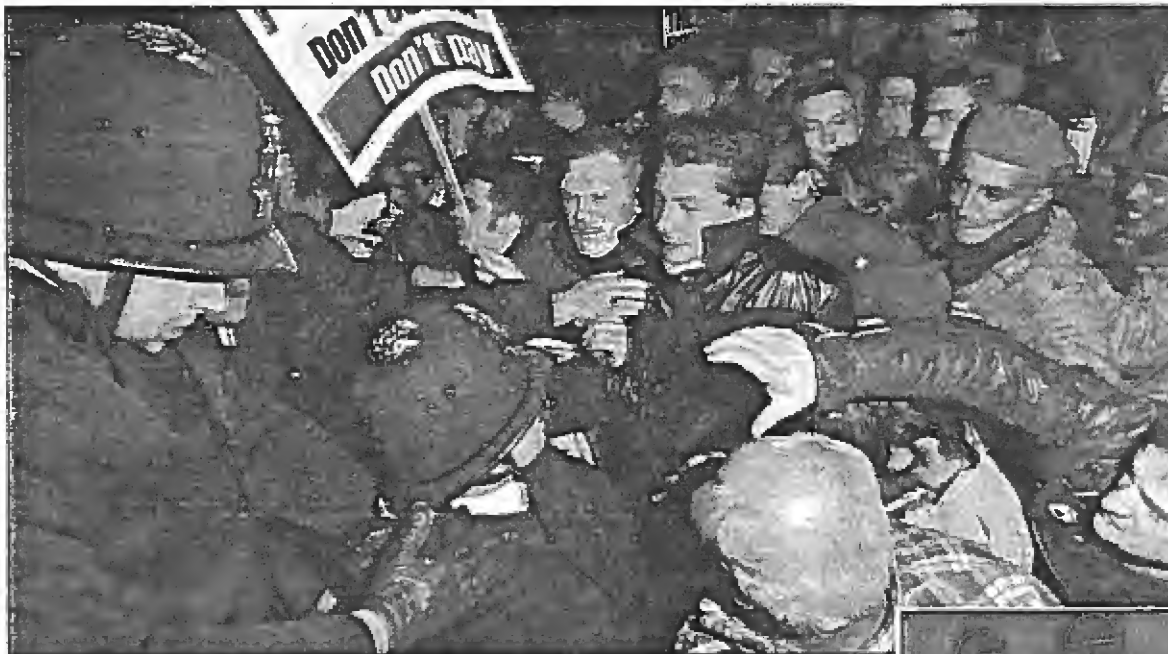
After the crowd had been cleared, the 200-strong hard core began smashing shop and office windows and laid siege to a McDonald's restaurant containing a handful of customers.

The restaurant windows cracked but did not smash. The mob then turned its attention to shops, banks and building societies in the rest of the street. The destruction was over within about five minutes and the only evidence of looting was at the electrical store.



Demonstrators clashing with police outside Hackney Town Hall where 4,000 people gathered to protest at the community charge

Police take a beating as mob goes on rampage



Head-on violence: Police struggle with protestors trying to force their way into Hackney town hall

From Page One

police, who brought in reinforcements from the Territorial Support Group, tried to seal off the area.

A mother sheltered her baby as a hail of bottles rained down on police.

One Militant boasted "we've done a copper" as an officer fell, blood streaming from his face.

Police at the scene said it was the most fierce fighting seen so far over the poll tax on London's streets.

Mass devastation was caused to the main shopping centre as gangs smashed windows and looted shops. One resident reported a woman running off with a wedding dress.

About 300 police, some armed with riot shields, broke up the main demonstration but pitched battles continued in side streets.

Police Commander John Purnell

said: "I think my officers acted with a tremendous degree of restraint."

Another senior officer said: "We were hit by cans, bottles, bricks and anything else they could lay their hands on. Some of our women officers were brutally kicked and beaten."

Post Office worker John McCrody, 51, who was struck by a bottle, said: "I feel close to tears at the moment. I detest the idea of the poll tax but these people are turning it into their own war."

Protests

The riot erupted just four hours after Mrs Thatcher condemned the rent-a-mob protests in the Commons.

"It is precisely the same kind of violence we have seen before at Grunwick, in the coal strike and at Wapping and it is a negation of democracy," she told MPs.

The Labour leader agreed, but he refused to back calls for an inquiry

into alleged links between Labour and Militant Tendency.

Tory Party chairman Kenneth Baker produced figures that showed Labour-led councils overspending by up to £213 per head above the Government's poll tax recommendations.

There was further violence in Swindon, Wiltshire, where a 2,000-strong column of protesters tried to batter their way into the town hall where the majority Labour Group was recommending a £499 tax.

A demonstrator was feared to have a broken arm after a car accelerated through a 200-strong crowd outside Camden town hall in North London where the Left-wing authority set a £534 charge.

At Barnet, the North London borough which includes Mrs Thatcher's Finchley constituency, police outnumbered the 50-strong crowd. The Tory council was expected to set the charge at £338 — £23 above target.



Before the storm: The crowd gathers

60 HELD AS POLL TAX MOB RUN RIOT

By NICHOLAS BUCKLEY, JACK LEE and JOHN TWOMEY

MILITANT protesters provoked the worst poll tax violence yet as they went on the rampage for the fourth day in succession last night.

The hooliganism, blamed on rent-a-mob thugs, continued despite condemnation earlier in the day from the Prime Minister and Neil Kinnock.

A riot erupted at Hackney Council in East London, where police and demonstrators fought running battles.

Sixty people were arrested, and a number of officers and demonstrators were injured by flying missiles.

Beer cans, flour bombs, paint and

sticks were hurled at police who were trying to control a crowd of 1,500 chanting protesters.

Many, who were carrying Militant and Socialist Worker banners, were dragged off, screaming abuse.

Officers made Wapping-style charges into the crowd in front of the town hall where Labour councillors were preparing to set a charge of £499 — £202 above the Government's estimate.

Liberal Democrat leader Paddy Ashdown, who witnessed the violence, said: "I have seen scenes like this in Belfast, and I was as frightened then as now." He challenged Labour leader Neil Kinnock to withdraw the Whip from his 28 MPs who are refusing to pay the community charge.

Cars were smashed by the mob as

Page 5 Column 2

LOOTERS ON RAMPAGE AFTER POLL TAX DEMO

LOOTERS went on the rampage last night as police fought running battles with stone-throwing poll tax protesters.

A mile-long stretch of 50 shops had their windows shattered after officers armed with riot shields charged a 5,000-strong crowd in Hackney, East London.

The sea of broken glass stretched from near Hackney town hall to within yards of the local police station.

Hooligans smashed windows with paving stones and concrete blocks before grabbing TVs, videos and radios.

More than 30 officers were hurt in the riot blamed on "rent-a-mob" gangs.

At least 57 people were arrested. Police Commander John Purnell said his men were attacked with bottles, sticks and cans in the worst violence so far over the poll tax.

SDP leader Paddy Ashdown was ushered to safety from a nearby meeting as the Labour-controlled council fixed a tax of £499.

In SWINDON, Wilts, smoke-bombs, fireworks and eggs were thrown at police guarding the council chamber.

An effigy of Premier Margaret Thatcher was burned as the council set a tax of £336.

Up to 1,000 protestors

besieged HILLINGDON civic centre as councillors prepared to try for a second time to set a poll tax rate.

Labour-controlled EALING council set its tax at £435 despite the protests of an angry mob showering councillors with bundles of paper.

Councillors struggled to be heard above chants and jeering.

A private security firm and police guarded Hendon town hall as

Riot cops stoned as shops are wrecked

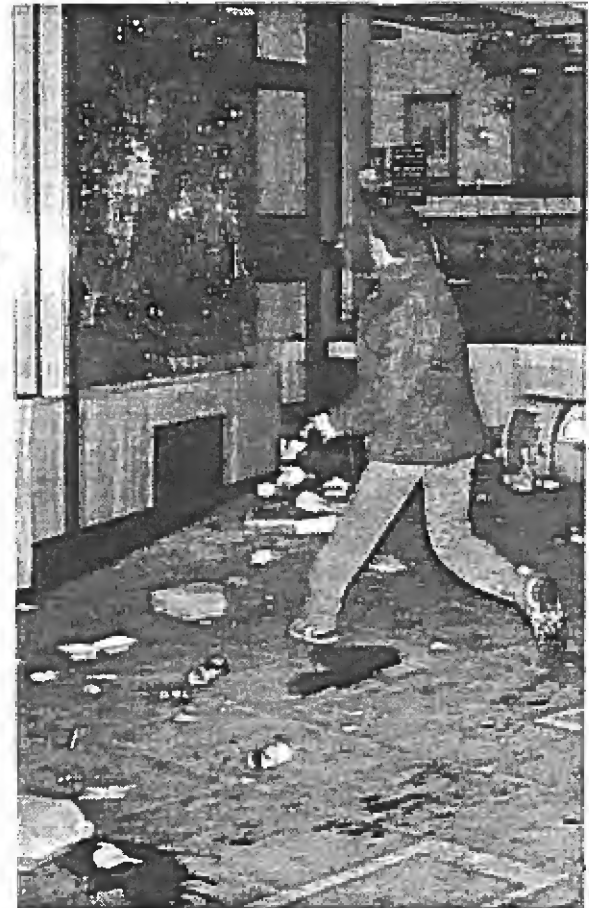
By JOHN PEACOCK
and MARTIN PHILLIPS

BARNET council set a tax of £338 affecting Mrs Thatcher's Finchley constituency.

Labour-controlled CAMDEN council agreed a figure of £534 amid shouts and screams from the public gallery.

Hundreds of frustrated demonstrators blocked traffic outside the town hall and only 50 were allowed into the public gallery.

ALL TEN Welsh Nationalist councillors in Labour leader Neil Kinnock's constituency at Islwyn, South Wales have vowed they will refuse to pay the tax.



RUNNING RIOT: Thug attacks a shop in Hackney

DAILY MIRROR 9.3.90



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Three RUC officers involved in the incident which sparked the still unresolved "shoot to kill" controversy cannot be compelled to give evidence at the inquests, the House of Lords ruled..... Page 3
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Secession move

The nationalist majority in Lithuania's newly elected parliament voted to declare the

Looting and smoke bombs in fourth night of trouble as 800 demonstrate in east London

Police baton-charge poll tax protesters

By Ian MacKinnon
Nicholas Timmins
and Nick Cohen

SMOKE BOMBS were thrown and police baton-charged protesters last night on the fourth successive night of demonstrations against the poll tax.

Waves of police from operational support groups ran into a crowd of about 800 demonstrators outside the poll tax fixing meeting in Hackney, east London.

Protesters had blocked roads outside the town hall and overturned a police car. As officers attempted to clear the streets, they were pushed back by the jeering crowd and faced a hail of beer cans, bottles and bricks.

At least 38 people were arrested and one demonstrator's leg was broken when a car ran into him. A policeman was injured when hit by a missile thrown at officers protecting the Labour-controlled council. The conflict degenerated into running street fights, shop windows were broken and there was looting.

Earlier yesterday, Margaret Thatcher described the angry reaction to the poll tax as a negation of democracy. However, later even Barnet in the Prime Minister's north London constituency failed to support the government line. The Conservative-controlled authority set a poll tax of £338 — £23 an adult higher than the Department of the Environment's recommended figure.

Elsewhere demonstrations were more robust than violent and there were few serious incidents.

Mrs Thatcher and ministers had earlier continued to attack the demonstrations to combat criticism of the charges, which must be paid by every adult in Britain from 1 April. At Prime Minister's question time she said those Labour MPs who refuse as a matter of conscience to pay the tax were "quite wrong".

Later in a Glasgow speech, the Prime Minister accused Labour of wanting to "tax, tax and tax again". Its alternative to the poll tax was a nightmare, she said.

Neil Kinnock fully supported her condemnation of violence and said he agreed with every-



The early stages of the violence in Hackney last night. Demonstrators attack police lines at the bottom of the town hall steps

Photograph: Andrew Chapman

thing she had just said "as I have long made clear".

But Labour's leadership was embarrassed by Tony Benn, who said the Labour movement should defend all those including Labour MPs who are refusing to pay "and pledge itself to an amnesty to lift all the penalties which may be imposed on them".

While those who defied the law must expect punishment, he said, "there is no moral obligation to obey an unjust law".

The country, he said, was "witnessing the first major civil disobedience campaign since the

suffragettes" and over the same issue of democratic rights. "If enough stand firm against the poll tax we can compel the Government to withdraw it."

A charge of £499 will be levied on adults in Hackney, one of Britain's poorer districts. The trouble began after the tax was fixed in a barricaded council chamber.

Only 40 people were allowed into the public gallery and the debate took place with only a few minor interruptions, including the throwing of a floral bomb at the Labour leader, John McCallery.

Cleaners and about 70 Nalgo

union staff had earlier walked out in protest against what they described as "Fort Knox" conditions inside the town hall, with doors and windows boarded up and a private security firm patrolling.

In Swindon, Wiltshire, several hundred demonstrators were held back by police. The protest was largely peaceful, but about 30 youngsters used unsuccessfully to break down the council office doors, pushing against police lines rather than fighting.

Others held up an effigy of Mrs Thatcher with a noose around her neck and set fire to it.

Camden Council, in north London, set a poll tax of £534 — one of the highest. Despite having to cope with the worst homelessness problems in the country, the Government has decided every resident must contribute £75 towards the "safety net" which goes to authorities in other areas.

The Labour-controlled council in Ealing, west London, where Mr Kinnock lives, set its poll tax at £435. About 250 protested outside but there was no violence.

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Jitters over Thatcher reach Cabinet level

By Anthony Bevins
Political Editor

CONSERVATIVE Party jitters about the poll tax and Margaret Thatcher's position as leader have reached Cabinet colleagues, it was reported at Westminster last night.

Well-placed sources told *The Independent* that a small group of Cabinet ministers have discussed options including the suggestion that Mrs Thatcher might be asked to stand down in favour of

party chairman, might be proposed.

One source said last night: "Ken has much to lose and little to gain; Michael has nothing to lose and all to gain."

Other potential contenders, such as John Major, Chancellor

Thatcher 'breaking poll tax pledge to the poor'

MARGARET THATCHER was yesterday accused of breaking an election pledge that hundreds of thousands of the poorest people living on income support would receive compensation for their share of the average poll tax bill.

The charge came as the Department of Social Security said that no help beyond that already announced was to be given to the 4,200,000 people on income support to help them meet poll tax bills that are one third higher than the Government anticipated.

Michael Meacher, Labour's social security spokesman, said: "That is a clear breach of the election pledge. She said the com-

By Nicholas Timmins
Political Correspondent

pensation would be for the average bill and it is clearly not going to cover the average bill for income support claimants."

The Child Poverty Action Group said that even taking the likely average bill in England of £363, that would leave single people under 25 about 20p a week worse off than if they received compensation for the average bill, and couples 37p a week poorer.

From 1 April, even those who live on the "safety net" benefit will have to pay 20 per cent of the

community charge. To help them do that, £1.30 for adults over 25, £2.30 for couples, and £1.15 for single people under 25 was built in to benefit rates from last April. Announcing the figures, John Moore, then Secretary of State for Social Security, said it was a "once-and-for-all adjustment".

The cash followed Mrs Thatcher's pledge at the last election that claimants would be given sums equivalent to 20 per cent of the average community charge in England and Wales to help them pay their bills.

Depending on the level at which councils set the poll tax, that would mean some would get

more compensation than the 20 per cent they actually paid and some less. "But it will be an average amount," she said.

But the Department of Social Security said this week that although the average bill is set to be a third higher than the Government anticipated, the compensation announced "remains a once-and-for-all adjustment".

"There is no intention to increase these sums," the department said, beyond the 5.2 per cent increase in April in line with the general rise in benefits.

Mr Meacher said that when the compensation was set, it was pitched higher than needed to

cover the Government's then estimate of the average poll tax, after Mr Moore told the Treasury that income support recipients "tend to be in poorer authorities with higher spending levels per capita". The Prime Minister's pledge, he had told the Treasury, "was to protect the average liability of those on income support".

The CPAG said: "The bills are likely to be significantly higher, as Mr Moore pointed out, in the poorer areas where most claimants live. In Haringey, for example, where the poll tax is likely to be £572, those under 25 will be paying £1 a week more than the compensation they are getting."

Even in Mrs Thatcher's Barnet where the poll tax will be £338, many claimants would still be a few pence a week worse off than if compensation was pitched at the level of the average bill, CPAG said. In Conservative-controlled Windsor and Maidenhead, with a £461 charge, claimants faced bills between 40p and £1.12 a week more than their compensation.

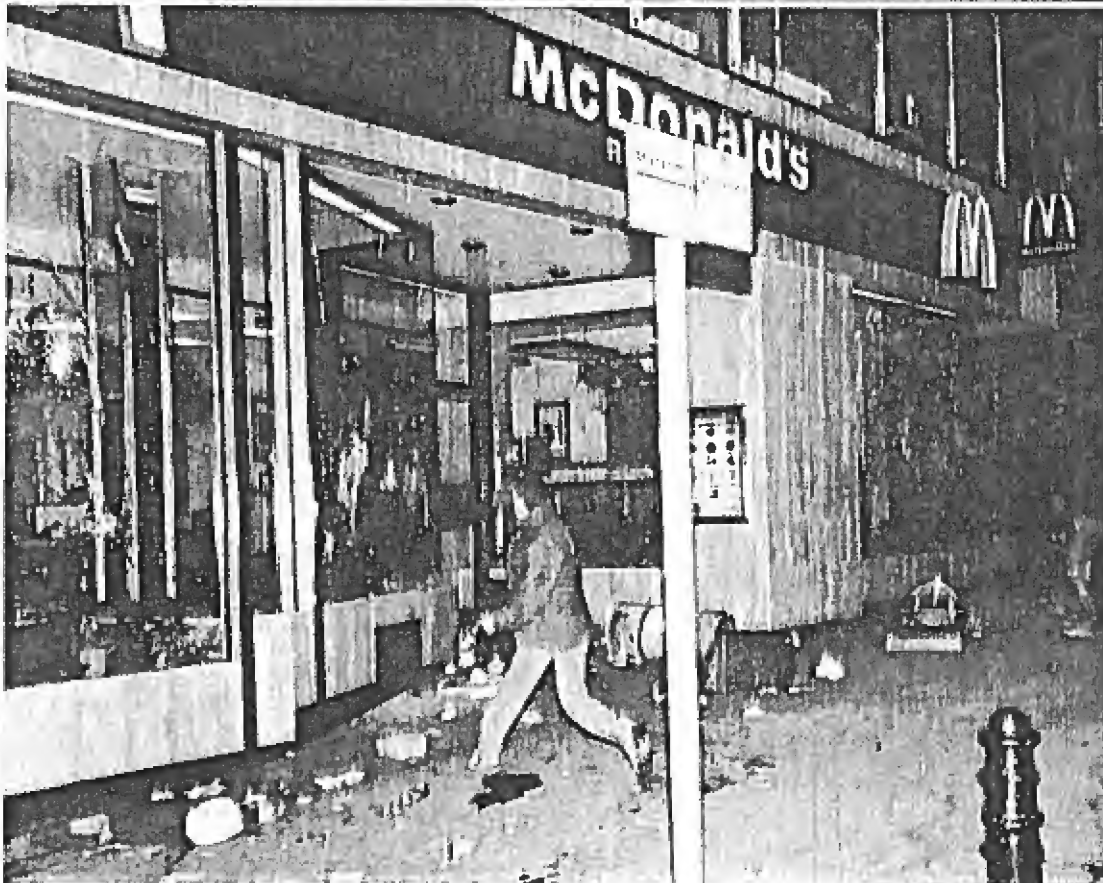
Social security ministers are aware that the compensation will not meet the average liability for income support claimants. The issue has been raised with the Treasury, but there is no indication it will be increased.

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Police confront part of the 800-strong crowd outside Hackney Town Hall in east London last night, where councillors were meeting to fix the poll tax (Photograph: Andrew Chapman) Right: Police with riot shields outside McDonald's in Mare Street, which was badly damaged by protesters during the disturbances in which 38 people were arrested (Photograph: Peter MacDiarmid)

POLL TAX MOB LOOT SHOPS!



Shattered... a rioter hurls a brick through the window of McDonald's after looters went on the rampage

● 57 held in Hackney riot

● WPC's car is overturned

By MIKE SULLIVAN

MOBS looted shops and battered police when an anti-poll tax rally turned into a bloody riot last night.

One terrified WPC who fled from a barrage of rocks had her panda car **OVERTURNED**. Fifty-seven people were arrested.

Rampaging youths grabbed videos, TVs and other valuable goods as at least **SIXTY** shops were looted during the riot in Hackney, East London.

TV rental shop **DER** was stripped. Gangs of yobs smashed windows in virtually every shop in the main shopping area, including Woolworth, Marks & Spencer and McDonalds.

GRABBING

Passers-by joined in, grabbing armfuls of clothes, books and jewellery.

One woman was spotted running away with a wedding dress.

The riot began after 5,000 protesters were locked out of the town hall as councillors met to fix Hackney's poll tax.

At least 30 police and 12 demonstrators were hurt.

Twenty of those arrested live outside Hackney.

Resident Stephen Miles, 20, said: "It wasn't the poll tax protesters who started the trouble. It was Militants who weren't from round here."

SUN 9.3.90

'KILL THE PIGS'

Chant of hatred as the poll tax rioters attack police lines

By MIKE SULLIVAN, GEORGE PASCOE-WATSON and MARY GOMERFORD

RAZED mobs screaming "Kill the pigs" went on a rampage of violence and looting during an anti-poll tax rally last night.

Rioters pelted police with rocks, bottles and smoke bombs. A terrified woman officer had her ar overturned and another was slashed on the head with a brick thrown from a bridge.

More than SIXTY stores were damaged as crooks used a poll tax protest outside Hackney Town Hall, East

London, to go on a crime spree. They smashed the windows with paving slabs and ran off with televisions, videos, jewellery, books and clothes.

Passers by, including women and girls, joined in - and one was seen making off with a wedding dress.

Hundreds of police reinforcements were sent in by the vanload.

Fifty-seven people were arrested. At least 30 police and a dozen demonstrators were injured.

Local resident Peter Adams, 48, said: "This was a shameful night for Hack-

ney. It had nothing to do with the poll tax."

The trouble started as a frenzied mob of thousands were locked out of the town hall by a police cordon as the Labour-controlled council met and set one of London's highest poll tax rates - £480.

Protesters ripped up a traffic sign and used it as a battering ram to get into the building.

Banners

Missiles were hurled and police with batons charged the mob. The two sides battled for the next half an hour.

Police had their helmets knocked off and were showered with bricks, bottles and beer cans.

Protesters waving militant banners waved the violence on police. But local demonstrators said militant supporters, who came from outside Hackney, stirred up the riot.

The two WPCs attacked went to hospital for treatment for cuts and bruises.

Youths dressed in punk and hippie gear also tried to overturn a police van after a protester was arrested.

A brick was thrown through the front windscreen as it drove off.

A police motorcyclist was knocked from his bike. He was rushed by ambulance to hospital.

Buses

Youths held up buses, forcing passengers to get off.

Crowds yelled "scum" at Labour leader Neil Kinnock's wife Glenys as she arrived at a concert at the nearby Hackney Empire.

As police were pinned down at the town hall, gangs of youths stormed



YOU'RE NICKED A punk protester yells her defiance as she is marched away by police. In all, 57 people were arrested in the bloody riot



Slashed... a black copper drags a protester away by the neck picture by GAVIN RODGERS

through the surrounding streets, breaking into shops and stealing goods.

The TV rental store DER was stripped, with youths running out carrying armfuls of videos and televisions.

The black and white gangs smashed virtually every window in the main shopping area, including Woolworths, Marks and Spencer, McDonalds and a Jewellers. A McDonalds worker said: "It was terrifying. The cost will run into thousands."

It was 20 minutes before police arrived.

One officer, PC Gerard Jordan, was beaten up as he wrestled a looter to the ground.

A dozen mounted police rode in to break up the looting.

As shocked staff stood outside the wrecked McDonalds store, a passing youth laughed and shouted at them: "This is justice."



Overturned by the mob... the WPC driver was bruised



Victim... injured PC Gerard Jordan

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CHRIS HARRIS

Thatcher hits at Militant over poll tax

By Philip Webster, Nicholas Wood and Craig Seton

The worst clashes in the spreading poll tax protests broke out in London last night, after both the Prime Minister and Mr Neil Kinnock had condemned the violence as a negation of democracy.

Within hours of the two leaders' Question Time exchanges — during which the Prime Minister likened the violence to that seen during the Grunwick, miners' and Wapping disputes — pitched battles flared again.

In Hackney, east London, police drew batons as they came under a hail of missiles. At least 38 people were arrested, and both police and demonstrators were injured after bottles, sticks, cans and flour bombs were thrown at police outside the town hall. Protesters uprooted road signs to use as battering rams against officers trying to control the 1,000-strong crowd.

There were also clashes in Swindon and Camden.

Mrs Thatcher had said in the Commons that any violence or intimidatory dem-

onstrations — "organized, I understand from an excellent article in *The Times*, by the militant left" — were a negation of democracy.

The Labour leader said he agreed with everything she had said, "as I have long made clear", and again repudiated calls backed by some far-left Labour MPs for non-payment of the tax.

In spite of Mr Kinnock's efforts to root Militant out of his party, Conservatives privately believe the violence is

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deflecting attention from the Government's difficulties over the charge.

They were given further ammunition last night when a Labour Party member who has been reported to the national executive committee for his alleged Militant links was arrested during a demonstration at Dudley, West Midlands.

Mr David Rowe was arrested after an incident at the Labour-controlled borough council when eggs were thrown from the public gallery. The police said Mr Rowe would be charged with assault.

The Conservative tactics were plainly on view in the Mid Staffordshire by-election campaign as Mr David Hunt, Minister for Local Government, challenged Mr Kinnock to hold a public inquiry into alleged links with Militant.

"Mr Kinnock has this week called for a public inquiry into one of his and the Labour Party's paymasters, Mr Scargill. I think it's about time he called for a public inquiry into the links between Militant and the Labour Party", adding that "confusion, deception, irresponsibility, and illegality" were the hallmarks of Labour's opposition to the charge.

"The militants behind the disgraceful town hall thuggery we have witnessed this week

are not all banished exiles from the Labour Party," he said. "Around 30 of the most ardent supporters of the Anti-Poll Tax Federation, which is organizing these demonstrations, sit behind Mr Kinnock in the House of Commons."

As the war of words continued, Mr Tony Benn said Britain was witnessing the first major civil disobedience campaign since the Suffragettes, and called on the Labour movement to defend those who refused to pay the poll tax and to promise to lift any penalties imposed on them.

"There is no moral obligation to obey an unjust law, but those who decide to defy such laws, on moral grounds, must expect to be punished, believing that their sacrifice may help others, later, when the judgement of history confirms their stand," he said.

Dr John Cunningham, Labour's campaigns co-ordinator, pointed to the community charges set by Conservative councils in the constituencies of 13 ministers.

Responding to claims by Mr Kenneth Baker, the Conservative chairman, that a pattern was emerging with Labour as the party of high spending, Dr Cunningham said that Barnet Council in Mrs Thatcher's constituency had overshot the government target by £23; Mole Valley Council in Mr Baker's seat by £85; Tandridge Council in Sir Geoffrey Howe's constituency £79; and Suffolk Coastal Council in Mr John Gummer's seat by £101.

Mr Baker said the difference between the average charge in Labour-controlled London boroughs (£403) and those run by the Conservatives (£291) was staggering.

Last night Mrs Thatcher faced a 100-strong demonstration against the charge in Glasgow. The protest was led by Mr Tommy Sheridan, the Militant leader of the Anti-Poll Tax Federation, who said: "Thatcher's poll tax is particularly hated in a city where over 42 per cent are refusing to pay."



Voice of dissent: An angry protester outside Hackney town hall last night. At least 38 people were arrested in the worst anti-poll tax violence of the week.

How the activists use hotlines to mobilize armies of protest

By Kerry Gill and Ray Clancy

A new generation of anti-poll tax shock troops, armed with mobile phones, CB radio sets, and fleets of cars and coaches are poised to move into England as poll-tax agitation intensifies.

The so-called "scumbusters", already a familiar feature of the Scottish anti-poll tax campaign, are training agitators south of the border in their hi-tech tactics. Police are being warned that their confrontational approach could lead to increased violence, intimidation and civil unrest.

With Militant Tendency, anarchists and other left-wing groups determined to exploit protests over the introduction

The Civil and Public Services Association last night expelled eight Militant supporters after an inquiry into allegations that they used the union's printing equipment and Newcastle upon Tyne offices for political purposes. The executive is to question Mr John Macreadie, deputy general secretary, also a Militant supporter.

of the poll tax, the new tactics imported from Scotland threaten to spark a further round of violent clashes.

Thousands of federation groups in England have modelled themselves on the Scottish committees, which are sending activists on lecture tours giving advice on their latest tactics.

Activists at English anti-

poll tax meetings are already using loudhailers to incite the crowds as well as "runners" — members whose job it is to patrol the fringes of a demonstration gathering up people inclined to disband.

One of the "scumbusters", Mr Tam McLean, an unemployed bus driver, spent yesterday in the shabby surroundings of Edinburgh Trades Council manning a newly installed hotline. He and his colleagues in Scotland, where the tax was introduced a year ago, aim to block any action taken to recover unpaid debts.

Yesterday it was his turn to alert 200 or so shock troops of any imminent attempt by sheriff officers to carry out a pointing — the process by which a debtor's goods are assessed for sale to meet the

outstanding bill. Their aim, in Scotland and England and Wales, is to make the poll tax unenforceable.

In the process, lessons of co-ordination and communication learnt during the miners' strike and the Wapping dispute are given a new edge with sophisticated modern communications equipment.

The battalions of demonstrators are backed up with CB sets and a fleet of cars that enable them to rush to an address and force sheriff officers back from the doorstep.

When the poll tax bills are sent out in April the English groups will begin gathering lists of people who have said they will not pay. A sophisticated log book will be drawn up and the "scumbusters" will

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Hi-tech agitation: Mr Andy Clachers of Lothian Anti-Poll Tax Federation.

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INSIDE

TOURNAMENT OF THE MIND

● Round Four of *The Times* Tournament of the Mind, with questions devised and marked by Mensa, is on page 10. The first four rounds and the rules will be repeated tomorrow

● This year's Geneva

Anarchists exploit poll tax tension

By Jamie Dettmer

Hardline anarchist groups involved in some of the most violent industrial disputes of the 1980s are planning to exploit anti-poll tax demonstrations scheduled to take place outside town halls in London, according to police.

An anarchist manual produced during the print dispute in Wapping, east London, in 1986 detailing ways of sabotaging police riot tactics is circulating among activists in the capital.

The 32-page manual, *With-out a Trace*, provides advice on evading police forensic methods and lists radio call signs and codes used by Metropolitan Police districts and territorial support groups. The codes are useful in working out police tactics during a disturbance.

The manual, which was originally linked by the Spe-

cial Branch with the Hurricane anarchist group but was circulated widely to several violent punk anarchist sects operating in London, details how forensic scientists use blood, glass, textile and dust traces to provide evidence of an activist's role in a riot.

The resurfacing of the manual comes in the wake of reports in Scotland that the Militant-dominated Anti-Poll Tax Federation is planning to use mobile squads of activists with CB radios to organize "flying pickets".

A Scotland Yard source said: "The signs are that Trotskyite and anarchist groups are bringing into play all the technical paraphernalia and tactics we saw deployed at Wapping and during the miners' strike."

The reappearance of hardline anarchists' groups is particularly disturbing for the

police. They were prominent in some of the worst scenes of violence at Wapping.

The groups involved in 1986 included: Class War, which organized the "Bash the Rich" marches in Hampstead and Notting Hill; Flame-thrower; Crowbar; and the Direct Action Movement.

Police at the Wapping dispute and at the Broadwater

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Farm riot were convinced that their radio messages were being monitored by anarchists.

Anarchist groups have been identified at recent anti-poll tax demonstrations at Southampton and Reading.

Police fear that the anarchists will heighten the violence already seen at anti-poll tax demonstrations this

week. Yesterday further evidence emerged of the extent of Militant's domination of the All Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation.

It is clear that many of the most active local anti-poll tax unions are under the control of Militant supporters. They include:

Basildon APTU, where Mr John McKay, a Militant, holds sway; Grimby APTU, which was recently addressed by Mr Gareth Hallberg, a member of Militant's Youth Rights Campaign; Hull APTU, one of whose leading members is Mr Alastair Tice, a contributor to the Militant newspaper; Market Harborough APTU, whose secretary is Mr Martin Page, a contributor to Militant; Lion Farm APTU, whose chairman is Mr Bill Mullins, a member of Militant's central

committee; Lothians APTU, whose secretary is Mr Russell Taylor, a Militant activist who reported in the organization's newspaper how he had warned off sheriff officers by telling them he could "make a phone call and very soon a dozen cars would be here sharpish"; Loughborough APTU, which was recently addressed by Mr Phil Daws, a Militant supporter, and which organized a violent demonstration on Monday;

Oldham APTU, whose organizers include Miss Lynn Spence, a Militant supporter, and Mr Bryan Beckingham, an original shareholder in Militant's main company, WIR Publications, and a member of Militant's central committee;

Potteries APTU, where Mr Andy Bentley, a regular Militant contributor, is a prominent member; Swadincote

APTU, where a prominent member is Mr Paul Shawcroft, a long-standing Militant supporter who was expelled from the Mansfield Labour Party in 1985;

Whitwell APTU, where a prominent member is Mr Ian Whytes, a contributor to Militant; and Wrekin APTU, whose main Militant supporter is Mr Steve Brittain.

Many Labour councils, which are feeling the brunt of the anti-poll tax demonstrations, are tightening security on their town halls.

Some Labour boroughs are following the tactics used by Reading council earlier this week in restricting access to the public galleries in town hall chambers.

In Reading, 50 out of the 70 seats available to the public were filled by what one councillor described as "loyal trade unionists".

Labour man held after eggs are thrown at council

By Craig Seton and Jamie Dettmer

A Labour Party member who has been reported to the party's national executive committee for his alleged Militant links was arrested last night during an anti-poll tax demonstration at Dudley, West Midlands, as violence erupted for the fourth consecutive night outside town halls.

Mr David Rowe was arrested after an incident at the Labour-controlled Dudley Borough Council when three eggs were thrown from the public gallery. They fell without hitting anybody as councillors debated setting a poll tax rate of £387 a head.

Mr Rowe, who denies being a Militant member, was removed from the public gallery by police and was later charged with disorder.

His arrest was one of a number around the country in a night which saw the most violent scenes yet over the poll tax, the worst being outside Hackney town hall in east London, where there were at least 38 arrests and a number of police injuries during four hours of violence.

Part of a 1,000-strong crowd became involved in a pitched battle in surrounding streets throwing sticks, stones, bottles, cans and smoke bombs. Windows in almost 50 shops were smashed over a mile-long route and looters were seen taking videos and other valuable goods.

Mounted police were called to disperse a mob which moved to Hackney police station, where windows were also smashed. Road signs were uprooted by demonstrators and used as battering rams against a wall of police officers trying to prevent them storming the council chamber. Police reinforcements were

called in as 100 officers at the scene struggled to cope.

Commander John Purnell, in charge of the police operation at Hackney, acknowledged there was a period when police did not have sufficient reinforcements. "We had to bring in more men from other districts," he said. By the end of the night, 200 more officers had been drafted in. Despite the violent protests, Hackney's charge was set at £499, more than £200 above the government estimate.

At Labour-controlled Camden in north London the figure was £534, nearly £200 more than estimated. Around 150 protesters blocked the road outside Camden town hall while another 150 tried to get into the council chamber.

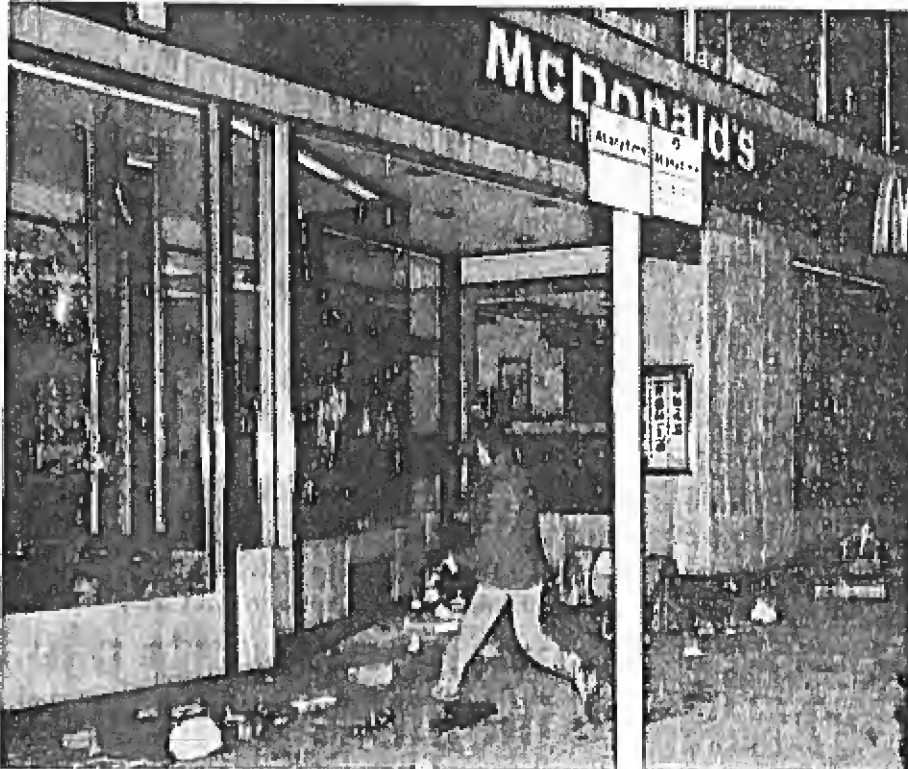
At Ealing, home of Mr Neil Kinnock, the charge was set at £435 against a government estimate of £328.

Almost 1,000 angry protesters in Swindon fought with police after they were prevented from going inside the town hall. There were arrests and at least one police officer was injured.

One Thamesdown councillor came out of the meeting to plead to the crowd to calm down. However, the anger intensified after the poll tax was set at £336, £63 above the government estimate.

Earlier, Welsh nationalist councillors started the first major significant local authority opposition to the poll tax in Wales.

The 10 Plaid Cymru councillors on Islwyn Borough Council, Gwent, which is in Mr Kinnock's constituency, said they would not pay the charge as they wanted to support hundreds in the area who could not afford the tax.



An anti-poll tax demonstrator turning to vandalism in Hackney, east London, last night after police broke up a protest

Mass rallies are target for recruiters

By Ray Clancy

Militant supporters working for the All Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation have attempted to recruit ordinary people at protest meetings around the country, in some cases using forceful tactics.

The extremists have angered many people who turn up to demonstrate against the poll tax at council meetings by asking for their addresses.

The federation is particularly strong on housing estates in Manchester, Liverpool and

Glasgow. Its Militant members pursue a plan aimed at collecting as many signatures and recruiting as many new members as possible. Mass meetings are their prime targets. The Militants, flitting from poll tax meeting to meeting, hand out leaflets publicizing the forthcoming marches in Glasgow and London on March 31.

Mrs Hilma Biles, a nurse from Plymouth, Plymouth, said yesterday she was "disgusted" by their tactics and angry about a front-page inter-

view in this week's Militant newspaper which she says she never gave. "It looks as if they have lifted an interview from one of the local papers in Plymouth."

Mrs Biles, who organized a march of 10,000 people last week, said most people did not want to be associated with Militant.

She was approached by Militants at the march who tried to get her to join the federation. "These Militants have been trying for two years to do what I have done in two

weeks," she said.

More vigorous tactics were used by federation activists who tried to recruit Mr Ray Cornforth, of Calstock, in Cornwall. "This chap pestered me. He kept asking for my address and eventually I gave it to him."

In Norwich Militant activists began by selling newspapers outside the town hall, where four people were arrested when violence erupted on Tuesday night, but turned to throwing missiles at windows.

Hotline to armies of protest

Continued from page 1

move in. "We are so well organized that we can get 200 people to the address of a pointing in under 20 minutes. The sheer force of us getting together frightens them off," Mr McLean, aged 43, said.

"I have been involved in stopping three pointings, as well as hundreds of demonstrations. We are just a huge mixture of ordinary people. I am not politically minded. My objection is what the poll tax is doing to people, splitting up families and making parents force their children out of

their houses because they can't afford the bills."

Thousands of leaflets, containing the hotline number, are being distributed to homes in and around Edinburgh by the Lothian Anti-Poll Tax Federation advising people what to do if they are threatened with pointings.

Mr Andy Clachers, vice-president of the federation, said they had more than 30 cars manned by posers of scumbusters ready to swing into action. "There are only 30 sheriff officers in the Lothians so they are completely out-

numbered. They used to go around in twos, but now they arrive in threes, two to go to the door, one to watch the car tyres," he said.

Mr Clachers, aged 26, claimed there were now about 260,000 people in the Lothians who had refused to pay or were seriously in arrears. Naturally, neither he nor Mr McLean had paid a penny.

He said they had stopped eight pointings. "It is mission impossible for the sheriff officers. So far the score is Anti-Poll Tax Federation eight, sheriff officers zero."

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A council worker clearing up the morning after demonstrators ran riot, smashing windows and looting shops in Hackney, east London

Street counts cost of a night of wanton violence

SHOPKEEPERS along a single street in Hackney, east London, where windows were smashed and shops looted by rioters, spent yesterday assessing damage expected to cost £250,000 in glazing alone, writes Toby Moore.

Plate windows in 28 shops out of 60 along the Narrow-way shopping section of Mare Street, near the town hall, were destroyed as a mob of several hundred people passed through its 100 yards at the height of the rioting.

Although bricks and paving stones were hurled at property ranging from building societies to a bakery and a McDonald's restaurant, only four premises were looted.

Shopkeepers are convinced most of the mob came from outside the borough. One said: "A bloke shouted, 'Just

wait until Brixton.' Every video-recorder and television set, about 40 items, was stolen from the DER electrical shop within sight of the police station, 50 yards from the street.

Thieves used what one eye-witness described as "a dustbin battering ram" to destroy the reinforced glass door. Once inside, they also ripped down huge sections of ceiling.

Hundreds of pounds worth of clothes were stolen from Zap Clothing next door. Just down the street, a wedding dress shop was looted of £1,500 worth of clothes.

A man was seen walking down the street with a shop dummy.

"I have never been so scared in all my life," said Mr Steve Davis, owner of the Hackney Fruit Stores, who stayed in his undamaged shop most of the night,

"First, we had the rioters who chucked things at windows pretty indiscriminately. Then we got the looters. They were separate.

"It had nothing to do with the poll tax. The kid who first threw a brick at the Woolworth's window was about 13 years old," said Mr Davis. He thought that many of those involved were from other areas of London.

At the opposite end of the Narrow-way, Mr Bernard Schwartz stood outside his record shop. "There was a mob of about 20 people just walking up the street throwing bricks and paving stones. They were very relaxed. Three said they were visiting from Ireland."

At his travel shop next door, Mr Stephen Scott, chairman of the Narrow-way Traders' Association, said the damage was nothing to do with the poll tax.

"These were just people with an eye for a main chance." Mr Scott was a Labour councillor for 60 years and has lived in the borough all his life.

"Everyone has a right to demonstrate against something they feel is unjust. But stealing videos from DER has never been part of the political protest, nor has taking wedding dresses.

"The most deplorable thing was this morning. Nobody said a word to me about the poll tax. All they talked about was whose windows were broken."

Outside the Narrow-way, 11 shop windows in Mare Street were smashed. Newsagent Mr Hesh Patel had thousands of pounds worth of cigarettes stolen. "We all feel pretty angry," he said. "This looting had nothing to do with poll tax."

Nine in court following riots

NINE men arrested during the riot outside Hackney Town Hall appeared at Old Street magistrates' court, east London, yesterday.

Among them were men from Glasgow, Sherborne in Dorset, and Blackburn, Lancs. The rest live mainly in east London squats.

Stephen George, 20, who lives in a squat at Filey Road, Hackney, was ordered to go to an attendance centre for 36 hours for throwing rotten tomatoes. He admitted threatening violence.

A protester who spat at a policeman was fined £250. Andrew Roche,

By Jenny Shields

21, of Wilmslow, Cheshire, who is believed to live in a squat at Laura Place, Clapton, east London, pleaded guilty to assaulting a policeman.

John Williams, 20, who had been working as a chef in Spain for five years and who gave his address as Fairhall Road, Hackney, was charged with affray. He was remanded on bail until March 23 on condition that he lived with his grandmother in Bangor, North Wales.

Jonathan Christian, 19, of Navarino Road, Hackney, was charged with affray and bailed to appear on March 23 on condition that he live with his mother at Yetminster, Dorset.

David Chavy, 27, of Graham Road, Hackney, who pleaded not guilty to

obstructing police, was bailed to appear on March 15 on condition that he lived with his girlfriend's parents in Scarborough and did not visit Hackney.

Brian Elias, 23, of Ainsworth Road, Homerton, who admitted using disorderly behaviour was fined £50. Russell Duxbury, 22, of St Hubert's Road, Hindburn, near Blackburn, whose address was given as a squat in a condemned factory in Stoke Newington, was remanded in custody until March 16 accused of assault, criminal damage and disorderly conduct.

Marcus Roskilly, 19, of Byres Road, Hillhead, Glasgow, accused of disorderly behaviour, was bailed until March 16. Martin Harvey, of Ambrogiate Court, Clapton, accused of threatening behaviour, was bailed until March 13.

Hackney cleans up after the looters

ALISTAIR GRANT



Shopkeepers in Mare Street, Hackney, clearing the aftermath of a night of vandalism and looting during the poll tax riot.

By Libby Jakes

Disgusting, disgraceful, rent-a-mob were the words on everybody's lips in Hackney, east London, yesterday as shoppers contemplated the aftermath of the poll tax demonstration that turned into a riot on Thursday night.

As they cleared shopfronts of shattered glass and assessed the cost of stolen and damaged goods, shocked retailers were contemplating the possibility of more ugly scenes at Monday's meeting of the Hackney Against the Poll Tax organization at the town hall, which the Labour MPs Miss Diane Abbott and Mr Brian Sedgemore are expected to attend.

"It is appalling," Mrs Maureen O'Connor said as she made her way along Mare

Street, the main shopping precinct. "I lived here during the war and never saw anything as bad as this." Mr Jerry White, Hackney council's chief executive, said: "Local people get the worst of all worlds — a high poll tax, cuts in services, and now this vandalism."

About 50 shops in the area had windows smashed and many were looted as the demonstration spread from the town hall and degenerated into a riot. Metal grilles and shutters proved no deterrent. Staff reporting for work at Woolworths, BHS and Mothercare were faced with hours of cleaning up as the stores closed to customers.

Only laminated windows, which splintered but generally held together, enabled business to continue at Marks &

Spencer. The DER electrical rental shop lost 30 to 40 pieces of equipment, including video cameras and recorders. Two television sets were recovered by police as they arrested looters taking them out.

Mr Robert Walker, whose discount furniture shop opens straight on to the street, estimated the evening had cost him £10,000. "Nothing was taken, but we've cleared up broken glass right at the back of the shop, and a lot of mattresses and sofas have been ripped."

The manager of a drug store estimated that it would cost £3,000 to replace damaged windows and stock thrown out into the road. "They were chancers," he said. He described Mr Bernard Schwartz, owner of P&J Records next door, as the "local hero", but

Mr Schwartz was more modest. "I just stood in front of my shop when I heard the crowd coming," he said. "It seemed to put them off."

"There were about 15 to 20 people doing the looting, but I did not recognize any of them as locals, and I have lived in Hackney for 27 years."

As well as estate agents, supermarkets and McDonalds, smaller retailers also suffered. Mr Keith Diss, owner of the Happy Days card shop, lost soft toys and £200 from his till.

Mr John Ridgway, a glazier, who started work at 10.30pm when he was called to the Job Centre, one of the first targets of the violence, said: "We moved on to the betting shop, and then we just carried on working all night. We have got at least 40 jobs lined up."

Waddington calls rioting disgraceful

By Stewart Tendler and Nicholas Wood

Mr David Waddington, the Home Secretary, yesterday called for an urgent report from Scotland Yard on the poll tax riot in Hackney, east London, which led to 56 arrests, scores of smashed shops and nearly 30 police injuries.

Mr Waddington said that the clash on Thursday night had been a disgraceful affair triggered by the "nasty left coming out of the woodwork". Senior police yesterday accused some demonstrators of being bent on attacking the police rather than the tax.

A team of detectives began to investigate incidents that could lead to further prosecutions. At least 45 shops or offices were wrecked, some were looted and a police car was badly damaged and overturned.

The Yard said that a third of the 56 people arrested were from outside Hackney. Dur-

ing the day nine men, from Glasgow, Dorset, Cambridge, Lancashire, and east London, appeared at Old Street Magistrates' Court; others have been bailed by police.

Three people were charged with criminal damage; three with assaults on the police; one with actual bodily harm against the police; three with obstructing the highway; six with burglary; one with theft of police equipment; three with being drunk and disorderly; one with possession of an offensive weapon; and 39 were accused of public order breaches.

Four protesters and 29 officers were injured.

Police estimate that the crowd numbered between 3,000 and 5,000 while the police, including reserves, were about 300. They were pelted with missiles including paint and full milk bottles, but did not use riot equipment.

a poll tax protester

**Pony-tailed squatter
is fined £250 and
says: I've no regrets**

By PAUL HENDERSON and HAL AUSTIN

PONY-TAILED Andrew Roche left a court yesterday convicted of his part in the Hackney poll tax riot and declared: 'I've no regrets'.

The unemployed scrap metal dealer, dressed in denims and heavy boots, simply shrugged off a £250 fine for spitting at a police officer and returned to the crumbling squat that has been his home for 14 months.

The 24-year-old from Wilmslow, Greater Manchester, has lived in a four-storey house with ten other men and women in Clapton, East London.

Chain-smoking Roche had his own theory as to where the blame lay. 'The police incited the violence,' he claimed.

'I was accused of assaulting a police officer, but all I did was spit on his back.'

He denied belonging to any political party. 'I'm not an anarchist ... it's rubbish to say that Marxist agitators were behind the demonstrations,' he said.

Screaming

Roche was one of three protesters who admitted offences at Old Street Magistrates Court in East London yesterday.

Unemployed labourer Stephen George, 26, from Earith, Cambridgeshire, admitted causing an affray.

He threatened violence against the police and led a mob attack on officers, the court heard.

'He was screaming obscenities and throwing objects, including rotten tomatoes, many of which struck officers,' said Jeremy Coleman, prosecuting.

George, too, was unrepentant. The objects were thrown 'for a bit of fun' said the dyed-hair youth, who moved into a squat at Falley Road, Hackney, six months ago. He was ordered to do 36 hours' community service.

Later he added: 'I'm not ashamed of what I have done and would willingly do it again.'

Unemployed cabinet maker Brian Elia, 22, of Alnsworth Road, Hackney, was seen shouting obscenities outside the town hall.

When ordered to stop by police he became aggressive, the court was told. He was fined £40, with £10 costs.

Six other men appeared at the court on charges connected with Thursday's events.

John Williams, 20, from Beech Road, Bangor, North Wales and Jonathan Christian, 19, of Thornford Road, Yetminster, Dorset, both accused of affray, were remanded on conditional bail until March 23.

Russell Duxbury, 22, unemployed, of St Hubert's Road, Blackburn, was remanded on bail



Stephen George: I'm not ashamed Picture: STEVE POOLE

until March 16 accused of assault, criminal damage and disorderly conduct. Martin Hardy, 22, unemployed, of Daubeney Road, Clapton, was remanded on bail until March 13, charged with threatening behaviour.

David Chavy, 27, of Northwood Street, Scarborough, was remanded on bail until March 16, charged with obstructing the police.

Marcus Roskilly, 19, unemployed, of Byers Road, Hillhead, Glasgow, remanded on bail until March 16, charged with disorderly behaviour.

Shopkeepers count cost of the mayhem

ROBERT WALKER gazed helplessly at the wreckage of his furniture shop yesterday.

'I'm basically a working-class man trying to make his way in the world — why take it out on me?' he asked.

His was one of 45 businesses attacked during the Hackney disturbances.

Thirty police were injured and shopkeepers face a bill totalling many thousands after the

thugs ran riot, smashing and looting.

'Sheer lunacy,' said Mr Walker, as he and his neighbours began the big clean-up.

Twenty yards of his shop frontage was destroyed, sofas tipped, shards of glass lay everywhere. 'It will cost £10,000

in window replacement, damage, and lost business because I cannot trade today.'

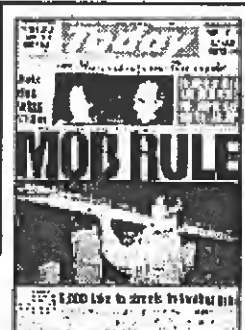
Glaziers were doing a roaring trade — at the Gateway supermarket, and McDonald's where every window was shattered.

Fourteen videos were looted from a TV rental shop. Marks & Spencer, British Home Stores and the Midland Bank all came under attack. Even the Jobcentre had to close yesterday for repairs.



Roche: Home is a crumbling squat Picture: MALCOLM CLARKE

DAILY MAIL 10.3.90



TODAY yesterday

Sinister leaders of riots hunted

A SINISTER cell of ruthless extremists thought to be responsible for organising the poll tax riots was being hunted by police last night.

Seven ringleaders, said to be members of the Trotskyite Socialist Workers Party, were seen organising the violence at Hackney, Haringey and Bristol.

At Hackney they used mobile telephones and CB radios to co-ordinate an attack on 100 police officers by a crowd of 5,000.

Of the 60 arrested in the melee, 20 came from addresses outside London.

The leader of a Poll Tax rent-a-mob told last night of his delight when his troops "got stuck into" police at Hackney.

Andy Murphy, 28, a leading light in anarchist group Class War, said: "About 20 of our people were selling Class War newspapers, but when the trouble escalated, they stopped and got stuck in with the people of Hackney."

TODAY 10.3.90

Protest organisers deny claims that outsiders caused violence

Andrew Cull

ACCUSATIONS that outside agitators and political extremists had incited violence at anti-poll tax demonstrations were denied yesterday by the All Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation.

The federation, which claims to represent 1,500 anti-poll tax unions, dismissed suggestions that it is dominated by Militant and the Socialist Workers' Party as "red scare-mongering" orchestrated by the Government.

Chief Superintendent Niall Mulvihill, who was in charge at Hackney, said many went to whip up feeling against the police. "What started as a peaceful protest was hijacked by others," he said. "We knew there was potential for a difficult demonstration, but no-one could have anticipated the number of protesters with so many agitators among them."

John Rathbone, press officer for the federation, said: "There is no doubt that it was local people involved." The violence came from heavy-handed police tactics; the federation was opposed to violence although it understood the frustration responsible.

"We are doing our best to steward these events; we cannot be held responsible for the looting."

Mr Rathbone said the federation was funded by local poll

tax unions and had no cash from other organisations.

The federation chairman, Tommy Sheridan, was expelled from the Labour Party last year for membership of Militant; its secretary, Steve Nally, expresses sympathy with Militant, although not a member.

Mr Nally said: "All this raising of reds under the beds is being deliberately organised by

Conservative Central Office. It denigrates the people involved.

"The federation cuts across political boundaries. It has stuck to the strategy of mass non-payment, and that is why it has been a success."

The SWP and Militant both claim credit for the scale of anti-poll tax demonstrations.

Pat Stack, a member of the central committee of the SWP,

said: "The anger is genuine and local." He denied that SWP placards were used as weapons at Hackney. He condemned police violence, but not that of those who "get caught up in" the disturbances.

It was not true that SWP agitators were bussed around the country. "Our members attended protests in their own areas."

Ken Smith, press officer for Militant, said: "We are not involved in any campaign of orchestrating violence or sending people around the country. We support a peaceful campaign of mass disobedience, not throwing bricks through windows, or punching police officers. Encouraging violence would be counter-productive."

He accused Tory Central Office of orchestrating a campaign against Militant, and said provocateurs were being used. "There are people who like a good ruck with the police, such as Class War and the SWP."

● Nine men arrested during the Hackney demonstrations appeared in court yesterday — among them men from Glasgow, Sherborne in Dorset, and Blackburn, Lancashire, and the remainder mainly from squats in east London. One was given an attendance order for throwing rotten tomatoes, another was fined £250 for spitting at a policeman and a third fined £50 for disorderly behaviour. Six others were bailed to appear later.

The accused organisations

● All Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation: Founded in November last year at a conference in Manchester called by Militant supporter Tommy Sheridan, chairman of the Scottish federation.

He now heads the All Britain federation, which claims to unite 1,500 anti-poll tax unions across the country and 20 regional or city-wide federations.

About 330 trade union branches are affiliated, together with the National Union of Students.

Local groups are autonomous. The federation is organising a major rally in London on March 31.

● Socialist Workers Party: Formerly called the International Socialists, this Trotskyist organisation's roots go back to 1948. It became a coherent organisation after 1968 and it now claims over 4,000 members.

● Militant: Militant says it has 10,000 supporters and sells about 40,000 copies of its Marxist newspaper, which was founded in 1964.

It claims not to be a political party, but a "trend of opinion within the Labour Party."

Militant is run by an editorial board and has a network of organisers to distribute the paper.

Since 1983 there have been 98 expulsions of Militant supporters from the Labour Party.

● Class War: One of the most militant of Britain's revolutionary groupings, drawing members from the young unemployed of the inner cities.

An anarchist group, founded in 1983, it supported the Brixton riots, and organised protests at Henley Regatta and outside the Stock Exchange.

Ravaged Hackney split over who was to blame for riot

Maev Kennedy picks her way through the debris of violent protest

THE Hackney riot chattered affably to Bernie Schwarz as it strolled past his record shop.

"There wasn't anyone running or whozzisname, they was walking. There wasn't a riot," he said yesterday.

"Most of the people was just walking, and there was a little gang, maybe 20, of young boys. They were saying 'hello Bernie, that your shop? You're lucky, aren't you?'"

Soon after 9pm on Thursday night, when the police broke up the poll tax demonstration outside Hackney town hall, Mr Schwarz, who lives over the shop, heard a lot of people on Narrow Way. He stood outside, arms folded. He is aged 61, short and stocky, and looks the stonemason he was. Only shuttered shops and P & J Records escaped.

The wreckage began at the town hall, and ended at the splintered front of Alan Selby's estate agents, half a mile away, opposite the police station.

As residents picked their way through broken glass yesterday, reaction was split. The young said a peaceful, if noisy, local protest was incited by aggressive policing. The old said the police coped splendidly with imported thugs bent on trouble. The shopkeepers said there were no police at the height of the looting.

The only evidence for the rentamob theory — the man who stole a TV from DER and got as far as King's Cross station — was passed up and down the street.

Chief Superintendent Niall Mulvihill was somewhere in the middle, as his officers had been. Four were treated in hospital, and though none were detained, several are off sick. "There is no doubt that a very small minority

was urging the crowd to attack my men, and there is no doubt that many local people were appalled by this and tried to prevent it."

The only common ground was that the number involved in the violence was small, perhaps no more than 20 or 30 out of an estimated 5,000.

Two middle-aged women friends went to the demonstration with a group of old age pensioners. "In the beginning it was very quiet, wasn't it? We were all singing. Even when that young boy climbed up on the balcony with his banner, they didn't arrest him or anything, they were kind of grinning at him."

"But there was a few bringing in bottles in plastic bags. We saw them. And then this little mob came around the corner, running, about 30 of them. We thought they were a little protest march. They started all the trouble."

Two women in their early 20s, one with a toddler in a push chair, were also caught in the thick of the crowd. They had a different story.

"The police completely over-reacted. They were charging into the crowd, batons swinging, and we were all penned up and nobody could get away... It wasn't just a gang of young louts bent on trouble. Well, it was, but it was on both sides."

They saw several Militant and Socialist Worker members at the front of the crowd, but recognised them as local — "they go to everything in Hackney."

Along with the banks, building societies, the betting shop, clothes shops, a bakery, TV shops, a butchers and department stores, the window of the Wedding Centre was smashed, and a shop dummy left in a man's arms, complete with off-white satin wedding gown, size 14, with embroidered train.

"We never had any special security," Brenda Bass said. "I mean who's going to rob a wedding shop? First you'd have to find a girl that liked the gown, then you'd have to find a girl to fit it."

GUARDIAN 10.3.90

VIOLENCE erupted in Brixton, south London, last night after a peaceful and good-humoured mass demonstration against the poll tax outside a Lambeth borough council budget meeting.

As the meeting began to break up, paint bombs and bottles were thrown towards speakers and police guarding the entrance to the town hall. A festive atmosphere, with a band playing Caribbean music and protesters dancing and singing anti-poll tax songs, quickly evaporated.

Organisers made appeals to the 2,000 people to leave quietly, but hundreds tried to get to the centre of Brixton, and the police called in reinforcements and repeatedly charged to clear the scene amid a hail of missiles. Two police were taken to hospital, a Panda car with a WPC inside was overturned, and six of the crowd arrested, as the skirmishing continued for half an hour.

Inside, the council set a budget which would mean a poll tax of £621 if 90 per cent pay it, or £588 if 95 per cent pay. The figure could be reduced after David Hunt, the local government minister, yesterday gave the authority another year to collect what he called its "staggering" £70m rent and rates arrears. That means the outstanding money would not be added to poll tax bills. The actual poll tax figure will be set next week.

At nearby Southwark, councillors set a poll tax of £390 last night as 200 police officers ringed the town hall. There was no repeat of the scenes on Wednesday when angry crowds halted the council meeting.

The Labour-controlled Haringey council in north London yesterday narrowly squeezed through £572.89, the highest poll tax so far, after four left-wing councillors had resigned in protest. The motion was carried on the casting vote of the mayor.

But in contrast to a stormy meeting four days earlier, which had to be abandoned amid rowdy demonstrations, there were no more than 50 protesters outside, and only sporadic shouts from the

By Alex Renton, Stephen Ward and Will Bennett

80 people in the public gallery. Between 1,000 and 2,000 demonstrators gathered outside Sheffield City Hall as the Labour-run council met to set a poll tax of £355. Police said they recognised many local political activists among the crowds, but there was also a group of local pensioners and a middle-aged woman with a placard that read: "Former Tory Voter Against Poll Tax".

Police, many on horseback, prevented several attempts to invade the building, at times coming under a barrage of missiles, but there was no violence, and no injuries or arrests.

In Gateshead, Tyne and Wear, a solidly Labour borough, no more than 100 people attended a rally outside the building as councillors set a poll tax of £320.

Police cordoned off an area of Wallsend last night as North Tyneside council met to set a community charge of £399 — £110 below last week's budget estimate. The figure was cut by digging into council reserves. A crowd of 600 people chanted anti-poll tax slogans outside the town hall but there was no violence.

In the wake of Thursday night's riot outside Hackney Town Hall, east London, in which 60 people were arrested, the debate continued yesterday on whether the trouble was sparked by outside agitators. There was also anger among local people about the looting and damage which accompanied the violence in which 29 police officers were injured.

Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill, the officer in charge during the incident, said: "Many local residents took those who had infiltrated their ranks to task over their actions. What started as a peaceful protest was hijacked."

One local woman, Deanna Sands, said yesterday: "I believe it was outsiders who came into the area and whipped up hysteria, and some people just got carried away."

But one teenager who was on the anti-poll tax march said the looters were from a local estate and claimed that much of the trouble was triggered by police charging and using truncheons.

Figures issued by police yesterday showed that 20 of the 60 people arrested in Hackney gave addresses outside the borough. Nine men, eight of them unemployed, appeared in court yesterday. Seven were local, one was from Cambridgeshire, and one homeless. The charges included disorderly behaviour, affray, obstruction, assaulting police, criminal damage and breach of the peace.

Poll tax exemptions and discounts, page 23
Centuries of protest, page 28

INDEPENDENT 10.3.90

Militant crowds live down rent-a-mob tag

By Ian Katz

AS THE first sticks and bottles began flying towards the police lines at last week's demonstration in Hackney, a cry went up above the anti-poll tax chorus.

"Get out of the flowers," a well-dressed man yelled at his errant child, hauling him by one arm from one of the two circular beds of violets cut into the lawn in front of Hackney Town Hall.

Here, behind the tight throng facing off against the police in front of the squat stone building, demonstrating was a more relaxed business. Leather jackets gave way to anoraks and a few suits, long hair to short; and a handful of prams weaved through the crowd.

At the edge of the crowd there was a poignant reminder of the unlikely political bedfellows produced by the poll tax campaign, as a former National Front organiser shook hands with a Liberal councillor, raising a hiss from nearby protesters.

As the ripple from a police charge nearer the front reached them, two young girls ran with the crowd. One of them said: "It gives you a bit of exercise, even if there's nothing going on."

An elderly woman took shelter behind a van, watching the scuffles through its windows.

Other pensioners were less passive. As a policeman's hat was tossed into the air, a silver-haired man in a blue blazer decorated with medals added his voice to the mob: "Get stuck into those fascist pigs."

Further back, protesters complained about the violence. Marlies Pryce, who carried an addressed envelope to prove she was a local resident, said: "It doesn't do anyone any good. Everyone should just sit down in the road."

At the front, a group of youths, who had clearly come to fight, taunted the police. But several protesters insisted they were not outside agitators. Alan Russell, a union convener, said: "They're all good, local Class War kids. Some of them are squatters who have recently been evicted by the council." There were others with particular grievances against the council. Ali Tahvildar, a librarian and a veteran of the 1988 library occupation campaign, said: "They are trying to cut lots of services including the libraries now."

As at other demonstrations during the week, the "outside activists" from the Militant Tendency and the Socialist Workers Party were much in evidence. But the extent of their activism appeared to be supplying banners to arriving protesters and assiduously trying to

sell their newspapers.

The following night at Lambeth, however, there were some familiar faces from the front of the Hackney crowd. Tony Savvas, vice-president of the London Institute Student Union, which represents several London art schools, admitted he had been at both Hackney and Haringey earlier in the week.

Refusing to condemn the violence which had taken place the previous evening, he said: "I was at the front because I think someone has to be."

"This 'rent-a-mob' tag is part of a peculiar British attitude that it is wrong to show solidarity with other people over a common issue." The predominantly white Lambeth crowd did display a carnival atmosphere for much of the evening. A young, trendy crowd danced around a steel band, and the ritual burnings of an effigy of Mrs Thatcher and a Union Jack had a curiously good-natured feel.

Some youths wandering through the crowd were clearly frustrated by its relative peacefulness; later they got their fight. But the tone of the demonstration was summed up by a middle-aged woman who grabbed a megaphone from one of the organisers. She shouted: "We are all ordinary people, not Militants."

CORRESPONDENT

11.3.90



A police car (left) toppled over at the height of the anti-poll tax violence at Brixton, south London, and (above) Steve Nally, second from left, a Militant supporter who says that it is not the group's policy to incite violence, at the Hackney protest that turned into a riot. An officer overpowers a demonstrator (right) in the worst clash of the week outside Hackney town hall after bottles, cans and flour bombs were hurled at police as they struggled to contain a 1,000-strong crowd

The Government blamed the Militant tendency for the rioting at town halls last week, but there was strong evidence that the demonstrations were fuelled as much by the anger of thousands of ordinary citizens. **Tim Kelsey, David Connett, Simon Garfield and Phil Davison** report from the front lines of the battle



INDEPENDENT
ON SUNDAY
11.3.90

Rent-a-mob meets the people's protest

SOME well-worn phrases returned to the vocabulary of the British media last week after an absence of several years. One was "rent-a-mob". Another was "the will of the people". Taken together, they fairly describe the opposing views of what was taking place outside a dozen or more town halls. What were we witnessing? Popular protest at the imposition of an allegedly unfair tax (shades of the Boston Tea Party)? Or a bunch of revolutionary agitators seizing the chance to throw rocks at the police and get on television (shades of a great many parties, usually small)?

One man at least has no doubts. Steve Nally is sure that history will record the poll tax protests as an uprising of ordinary people rather than as a conspiracy of anarchists or "flying pickets".

The secretary of the All-Britain Anti Poll Tax Federation believes that the broad popular support for anti-poll-tax protests is being obscured by violence at demonstrations, and allegations that Militant tendency has orchestrated the national campaign.

Mr Nally, 28, a graduate in law from the South Bank Polytechnic, London, who has since worked as a messenger and British Rail clerk, is a Militant supporter. Almost all the federation's senior officers are Militants. But Mr Nally denies that the group is a front for Militant. "The people leading the campaign are there because they're doing the work. Their political affiliations don't concern us," he said.

He claims that 1,000 local anti-poll-tax unions are affiliated to the federation, which is campaigning for mass non-payment of the tax.

He says that if theories of a national Militant conspiracy centre on the federation, they must be wrong. Many of the protests were

organised by independent, often Tory-led groups, who had been largely ignored by the media in their hunt for a hard-left conspiracy.

The federation was born on 25 November 1989 at a meeting in Manchester of 22 regional anti-poll-tax unions. The chairman of the meeting, Maureen Reynolds, who is now treasurer on the national committee, is a supporter of Militant. Most of the speakers, who included Roger Bannister, currently campaigning to be general secretary of Nalga, were Militant supporters.

The chairman of the federation, Tommy Sheridan, is a 25-year-old Scottish Militant who was expelled from the Labour Party last year, and all the regional representatives on the committee are, with two exceptions, supporters of Militant.

Dave Murray, a council employee in Basildon, who heads the federation's eastern region said: "It's a fact that a lot of people campaigning have been Militant supporters. Any position we have in the anti-poll-tax movement is on the back of hard work".

Many of the local unions are also headed by members of Militant. The secretary of the Suffolk Federation is Theresa Mackay, a regional representative for Militant.

The federation's posters and literature are printed on the *Militant* newspaper presses in east London, but officers deny the federation is funded by Militant. Money is raised, according to Mr Nally, by donations, jumble sales, and collections at protests.

While most of its officers support Militant, the vast majority of federation members do not. Militant claims to have a maximum of 10,000 supporters nationwide. The Coventry and Warwickshire anti-poll-tax federation alone claims 9,000 members. The Greater

Manchester federation, representing 65 local anti-poll-tax unions, claims to have 15,000 members.

The federation is much bigger than Militant, which could not possibly organise so many people, said Mr Nally. "It's wrong to claim that it's any one political grouping. It is a genuine working-class campaign. The Press is picking up on one or two people, trying to dig the dirt up on them. I've already had the *Daily Star* at my parent's place."

The attention has given an unprecedented marketing opportunity to Militant. However, Mr Nally said the cameras should be turned on "Mr and Mrs XYZ who live in Lambeth and could be faced with a bill of up to £2,500 — that's what the issue's really about".

Militant has grabbed the opportunity to solicit new members. A spokesman claimed that subscriptions were rising at a rate of 20 a day. At all the demonstrations organised by the federation, Militant has been present. Regular reports in the newspaper detail the increase in sales. At a peaceful demonstration attended by 1,000 people in Hillingdon, north London, more than 400 copies were sold.

The vast majority at Hillingdon, as at all the protests, came to express private grievances against the poll tax and were not members of the Anti Poll Tax Union, led by a Militant supporter, Wally Kennedy, which organised it. One local publican had come because a pensioner whom he employed part time was being forced to stop work and enter a home because she could not afford to pay the poll tax. "I know it's going to kill the old lady. It's not political. This tax is terribly unjust".

A demonstration yesterday in Tunbridge Wells, Kent, organised by the local anti-poll-tax union, which is affiliated to the federation,

passed without incident. The 600 protestors ranged from local Militant supporters to embittered pensioners. Katie Brown, 78, facing bills £500 higher than her last rate demand, said: "There's a lot of genteel poverty in Tunbridge Wells. At least 100 pensioners I know are angry enough to protest".

Both Militant and the federation deny encouraging violence. "It has never been and never will be our policy to advocate violence," Mr Nally said. He dismissed press reports that Scottish anti-poll-tax agitators have been lecturing English counterparts on strategies of crowd manipulation and aggression.

Violence has occurred at demonstrations organised by local affiliates. Mr Nally was one

Leading article 20

of the speakers at the protest in Bristol, organised by the Avon Federation Against the Poll Tax. Police baton-charged the crowd of 600 and arrested 21 protesters.

Mr Nally, who has attended several protests around the country, denied inciting violence. Addressing the crowd at Hillingdon, he warned several times during his speech against violence.

Robin Clapp, press officer for the Avon group, and a member of both Militant and the Labour Party, said that "99 per cent of the people attending were ordinary members of the Bristol public". The *Militant* newspaper stand was located next to the Avon federation stall. Mr Clapp denied any interaction.

An eyewitness said that both groups were operating loudhailers but "weren't inciting people to anarchy and bedlam". He described the crowd as "more families with prams than radicals and punks". The 21 arrested all had

local addresses. It was a local member union of the federation that organised the protest in Brixton, south London, on Friday in which 37 were arrested and several policemen injured. Officers were pelted with paving slabs, bricks and paint bombs by a group of between 30 and 40 of the 2,000 protesters outside Lambeth town hall. The meeting to fix a community charge of £560 was adjourned because of the violence. Police declined to blame it on any group.

Some of the worst violence, however, occurred at protests with which the Militant-led Anti Poll Tax Federation had no formal involvement. A demonstration in Reading was organised by the Reading Campaign against the Poll Tax. Police and local councillors blamed small groups from outside the town for the disruption. Four hundred protesters tried to storm the council chamber. Three people were injured and three arrested. Local people claimed that three coachloads of Socialist Workers' Party supporters from Swindon inspired the violence. "There was a sudden hardcore of young male protestors. After their appearance it became a lot more aggressive," an eyewitness said.

At a demonstration in Norwich organised by the Norwich Anti Poll Tax union, which is independent of the federation, seven arrests were made after 1,000 protesters attacked the town hall. The chairman of the union, Martin Smith, 25, said a "small group not involved in the campaign" were responsible. A police spokesman said: "There was a definite element determined to incite more aggressive elements in the crowd". The group was described by one protester as "local anarchists who had had too much to drink".

A substantial minority of protests were org-

anised by former Tory voters. John Waugh, a roofing contractor, led the Newbury Area Anti-Poll Tax campaign, which held a protest at Newbury Town Hall after which two people were arrested.

At Plymouth, where several were arrested a rally was in part organised by Hilda Biles, a housewife and former Tory voter. Superintendent Derek Roper said that the majority of those arrested were local. He noted "people with hoods on, inciting the crowd to kill the police", but did not know if they belonged to any organisation. Among those arrested was an elderly man who broke two windows in the council offices with his walking stick.

In Weymouth, a housewife, Sheila Jackson organised the peaceful protest by the South Dorset Action Against Poll Tax. She said that there was no justification — other than political opportunism — for claiming that the campaign was a Militant conspiracy. "You will find all over the county that the main body of the angry are ordinary people".

A 79-year-old silversmith and life-long Tory voter attending a poll tax protest at Sheffield insisted that Mrs Thatcher, who has said that these protests have been initiated by the same violent left responsible for Wapping and the miners' strike, had been misled.

"There are people here. The ones who get the publicity are the ones who make the noise. The silent majority exist." Around him swirled a sea of placards: "This is a class war," read one, "Former Tory Voters Against the Poll Tax", said another.

At Sheffield, the only groups "bussed-in" from outside were hippies, nursing cans of lager, from a commune in Leeds and member of Christians against the Poll Tax, a group from Guildford, Surrey.

A Sunday Times investigation team exposes the secret methods of the Trotskyite travelling circus

How Militant plotted the campaign

INSIGHT

THE commuter seated in second-class on the 2.40 pm InterCity train from Bristol to Paddington last Tuesday had revolution on his mind.

Steve Nally, 28, both a Militant supporter and a member of the Labour party, had left behind an anti-poll tax rally which erupted into violence in which four policemen were hurt and 21 people arrested as demonstrators tried to storm a council chamber.

He was on his way by train and taxi to Gillingham in Kent for another protest, which ended with police having to clear 150 demonstrators from a public gallery before councillors could set their community charge.

The mild-mannered bachelor spoke at both rallies. On Friday night he was in Lambeth, south London, as 1,000 people besieged the town hall: 37 were arrested, 10 police injured, and a mob overturned a police car. Yesterday he was travelling by rail to Gloucester for another protest meeting.

Nally, a law graduate who has worked as a City messenger boy and filing clerk at Waterloo station, is one of the travelling co-ordinators helping to orchestrate protests which have turned Britain's town halls into fortresses and

its council chambers into battlegrounds.

He has been a member of Vauxhall Labour party for seven years, despite his Militant activities. He even escaped reprimand when he clashed in the street with Neil Kinnock and warned the Labour leader what would happen to him if he continued to expel Militant members from the party.

Nally was careful to avoid confrontation at the seven rallies he addressed last week. He would arrive to cheers, harangue the crowd through a megaphone and then disappear before trouble began.

He is secretary of the All-Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation, a Militant front.

"We have never advocated violence as a strategy or tactic," he insisted yesterday. "The only thing we have ever advocated is to build a peaceful mass campaign of non-payment."

"I don't condone the violence that has occurred. I can understand it. There are people out there who, after 11 years of this government, feel down-trodden. It is understandable that anger boils over."

Nally's role in a Militant plan to build a mass resistance



Caught in the act: Militant supporters in action last week. On the left, two appearances by Steve Nally, who is still a member of Vauxhall Labour party. On the right, two sightings of John Bulaitis

movement to the poll tax by recruiting 10m people who refuse to pay is in direct defiance of Labour party policy.

But there is growing evidence that, despite Labour's attempts to distance itself from the poll tax demonstrations, its left-wing members are taking an increasing role in their organisation.

Nally spoke at Southwark, south London, last week but had left for another rally at Newham, east London, before

300 people stormed the town hall.

Leading the surge were Nick Wrack and Bob McKee, both Militant supporters still active in the Labour party. They used a megaphone to urge the crowd on. A council meeting called to set the borough's community charge had to be abandoned.

Wrack, a member of Peckham Labour party, claimed victory. "There are people who are saying the poll tax

demonstrations are all the work of the Militant Tendency," he said. "Personally I support Militant and would like to see the day when everyone joins us, but this demonstration was about local people and their anger at the poll tax."

McKee, a Militant activist for 20 years and the movement's economics guru, is a former marketing manager for Deloitte Haskins and Sells, the chartered accountants. He has

been suspended from holding office in the Labour party but is still a fully paid-up member of the Bermondsey party, as well as treasurer of the Southwark anti-poll tax federation.

The federation is one of scores around the country now under Militant control. Its secretary is Maggie Lough, and other workers include Shareen Blackall, Margaret Crear and Julie Donovan. All are Militant supporters; all Labour party members.

Another who has played a key role in the Southwark federation is John Bulaitis, a Labour party member for 15 years and Militant supporter since his youth.

Bulaitis, a former member of the national committee of Labour party Young Socialists, addressed the crowd at Southwark and, 24 hours later, was among a 500-strong crowd besieging Hillingdon town hall 20 miles away.

At first he claimed to be a local resident, but then admitted to The Sunday Times that he had travelled from his home in Southwark in order to attend the rally.

"As Militant supporters we are members of the Labour party and the trade union movement," said Bulaitis. "We represent an important strand of opinion and therefore it is natural we are involved in a major way in the anti-poll tax struggle."

One of the main organisers of the Hillingdon demonstra-

tion was Wally Kennedy, 41, a delegate to the Labour party conference in 1988. A former council worker, he is secretary to both Ruislip-Northwood Labour party and the Hillingdon anti-poll tax federation, as well as a long-standing Militant activist.

Militant has been accused of hijacking the anti-poll tax movement, but in reality it invented the campaign and has continued to dictate it.

It began organising anti-poll tax unions on housing estates in England and Wales a year ago with the slogan "don't pay, don't collect". It now claims to have set up 1,000 such groups.

Nally, who lives in a 16th floor council flat in Lambeth, began on his local estate and then spread the message throughout south London, helping form the Southwark group.

Last November he was el-

Continued on next page

SUNDAY TIMES
11.3.90

Amid the fury listen to the cynical sound of Trotsky laughing



The left is in retreat everywhere except on the stormy town hall steps of England's heartland — thanks to the poll tax policies of Margaret Thatcher, writes **ROBERT HARRIS**

In a suburb of Mexico City called Coyoacan, baking in the sun, stands a massive pale stone on which is carved a hammer and sickle. If you were to place your ear to it this weekend there is a faint chance you might hear some sepulchral laughter. For this is the final resting place of Lev Davidovich Bronstein, alias Leon Trotsky.

Not that Trotsky, whose cranium was smashed in by an ice-pick at this spot 50 years ago, has had a great deal to smile about of late. The Soviet Union, which he helped found, has just voted to legalise private investment. The Red Army, which he commanded, is pulling back from Eastern Europe. Trotsky's influence, like that of his murderer, Stalin, is everywhere in retreat.

Everywhere, that is, except for a few pockets of dear old rural England. As Trotskyists the world over scurry for cover, their British comrades are suddenly on the march, in the vanguard of the working class revolution in such hitherto-neglected proletarian outposts as Windsor and Maidenhead, Worcester and Norwich.

It has required a politician of genius to breathe new life — however briefly — into Trotskyism in the last decade of the 20th century. Margaret Thatcher, armed with the poll tax, has managed it.

The guiding star of the Fourth International, a master of political irony, would have

appreciated the joke.

It was back in 1933 that Trotsky first suggested to his followers the tactic of "entryism": infiltrating mass social democratic movements throughout the world in order to seize control of them from within. In 1962, the Revolutionary Socialist League (RSL) was duly founded in Britain "to win the leadership of the working class" by capturing the Labour party. The RSL subsequently became better known by the title of its newspaper, Militant.

As the natural instinct of most Labour party members is to tolerate fellow left-wingers, however extreme their views, Militant made progress. But entryism, as Neil Kinnock put it, is a "cancer". You cannot tolerate it; you must destroy it. Since 1985, in pursuit of Militant's destruction, Labour — at the cost of much time and energy — has



Trotsky: making poll tax hay

made some progress. At least 100 ringleaders have been expelled, while the extension of one-member one-vote has drastically diluted the influence of the few thousand who remain.

By the beginning of this year, British Trotskyism, confronted by the collapse of communism abroad and Labour's reform at home, was on the run. It had lost its sense of direction. It was starved of publicity. Its revolutionary mystique had evaporated. Now, the prime minister has given it back all three.

Thanks to the campaign against the poll tax, Militant, along with various ultra-left and anarchist groups, has been able to practise entryism again: not on a political party but on a popular movement. Thirteen out of the 17 regional organisers of the All Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation are said to be Militant supporters. Its insufferable young leaders clearly think that all their Christmases have come at once: indeed, comrades, that the hour of the revolution is at hand.

The blame for this should be pinned where it belongs: not on the Labour party, which has endured much agony to purge itself of the bullies and the thugs, but on the government itself. It has created what Trotsky would have diagnosed as the classic pre-revolutionary phase. Elements of the *petit bourgeoisie*, hitherto Mrs Thatcher's strongest



Street politics: demonstrator at Hackney, east London last week. The only real gainer from the civic violence is Militant

supporters, believing their incomes and savings to be under threat, have allied themselves with the disaffected working class.

All that the Trotskyists have done is follow the master's teachings: first they recognised the opportunity; then they either set up front organisations or infiltrated existing campaigns; now they have seized the leadership. Meanwhile, the Labour party, with its denunciations of law-breaking, has showed itself to be what Trotsky always said it was: a movement of "reactionary social patriots". All in all, a textbook case. (I exaggerate; but only somewhat.)

In the past, the government was able to enact anti-left measures — against the trade unions, for example — because it had widespread public support. But the poll tax is different. It does not have the consent of the governed. Pressing ahead with it, despite the doubts expressed in every quarter of the Tory party, was a foolish and dangerous act, even in a democracy as mature and stable as our own. The government has played

into the agitators' hands.

Of course, there is a sense in which this is precisely what the government wants: it can now play up the scenes of violence to distract attention from the real cause of the trouble, the injustice of the poll tax itself.

There is a symbiosis between Militant and Mrs Thatcher which enables them to feed off one another. She gives them a focus for their class-war propaganda. They give her an ideal enemy: it is much more to her taste to fight the likes of Militant than it is to deal with Mr Kinnock's milk-and-water Labour party.

Watching the relationship between Militant and the prime minister is like watching some immensely bitter marriage which nevertheless continues to survive, to the bafflement of outsiders. The truth is, each would be lost without the other. Mrs Thatcher has even reached out a hand and pulled another favourite partner, Mr Tony Benn, off the scrapheap of history. He is once more to be seen tottering around the place, muttering about George

Lansbury and the suffragettes.

The prime minister's problem is that she has not only conjured up ghosts, she is fighting them. If the Labour leadership offered comfort to the Militant demonstrators — a guaranteed future pardon for all rioters, for example, or reimbursement of fines imposed for non-payment — the government would be on to a good thing. Unfortunately, Mr Kinnock has rather spoiled the game. He has unequivocally denounced the violence and urged people to pay their bills.

For that reason, I doubt whether the ordinary voter, watching the violence on television, says: "Look at those horrible communists, Mabel. We must vote for Mrs Thatcher as the only person who can deliver us from these ruffi-

ans." The voter is more likely to say: "Look at the latest bloody mess that woman has landed us in. Everyone told her this was going to happen, but she thought she knew better, as usual."

The only real gainer from the violence and its publicity, therefore, is Militant. It is a strange situation. But then, as Trotsky observed in his history of Bolshevism: "The revolution does not choose its paths. It made its first steps towards victory under the belly of a Cossack's horse."

How wonderful it is — how richly, exquisitely comic — that Trotskyism has made its biggest advance of the 1990s in the Conservative Home Counties, under the belly of an English police horse, outside the local town hall.

and reveals the workings of its £1m electronic headquarters, nerve-centre of the town halls protes:

that exploded in poll tax violence

Continued from page 4

ected secretary of the all-Britain anti-poll tax federation. Twelve of the federation's 16 regional organisers, together with its national press officer, have been identified as Militant supporters.

In February delegates from 22 London groups met in Euston and began to plan a campaign of action leading up to a national march to Trafalgar Square on March 31.

The patterns of current protests have been similar: first, the town hall has been besieged, then the council chamber has been invaded, fire alarms set off and councillors pelted with missiles in an attempt to force them to abandon their meeting.

The methods are increasingly elaborate: on Tuesday, loud-hailers from a Militant stall outside Bristol's council offices were used to incite the crowd to break police lines; on Thursday, vans were bussing youths into Hackney; by Friday night, the mob that rioted in Lambeth was controlled by the use of a drumbeat and orders issued on mobile telephones.

The "rent-a-mob" for these demonstrations has been recruited under the umbrella of the Youth Rights Campaign (YRC), ostensibly an offshoot of the Young Socialists but controlled and funded by Militant.

The campaign has set itself a target of recruiting 20,000 members and hopes to have 3,000 by next month. In the past few weeks the main objective has been to mobilise activists, many in their late teens, to cause trouble at targeted council meetings.

Paul Unsell, the YRC's national secretary, issued a call to arms. He told members they must learn from events in Romania and East Germany: "Who can fail to be inspired by the young people... who

fought police states and beat them?

"They have toppled their Stalinist governments. And that's what we can do to Thatcher and the Tories. Ceausescu was the first of this decade, not the last."

The control headquarters for Militant's campaign is its 1½-acre complex of buildings in Hepscoot Road, Hackney Wick, east London. The centre is surrounded by barbed wire and has television surveillance equipment. Workers gain entry through electric gates.

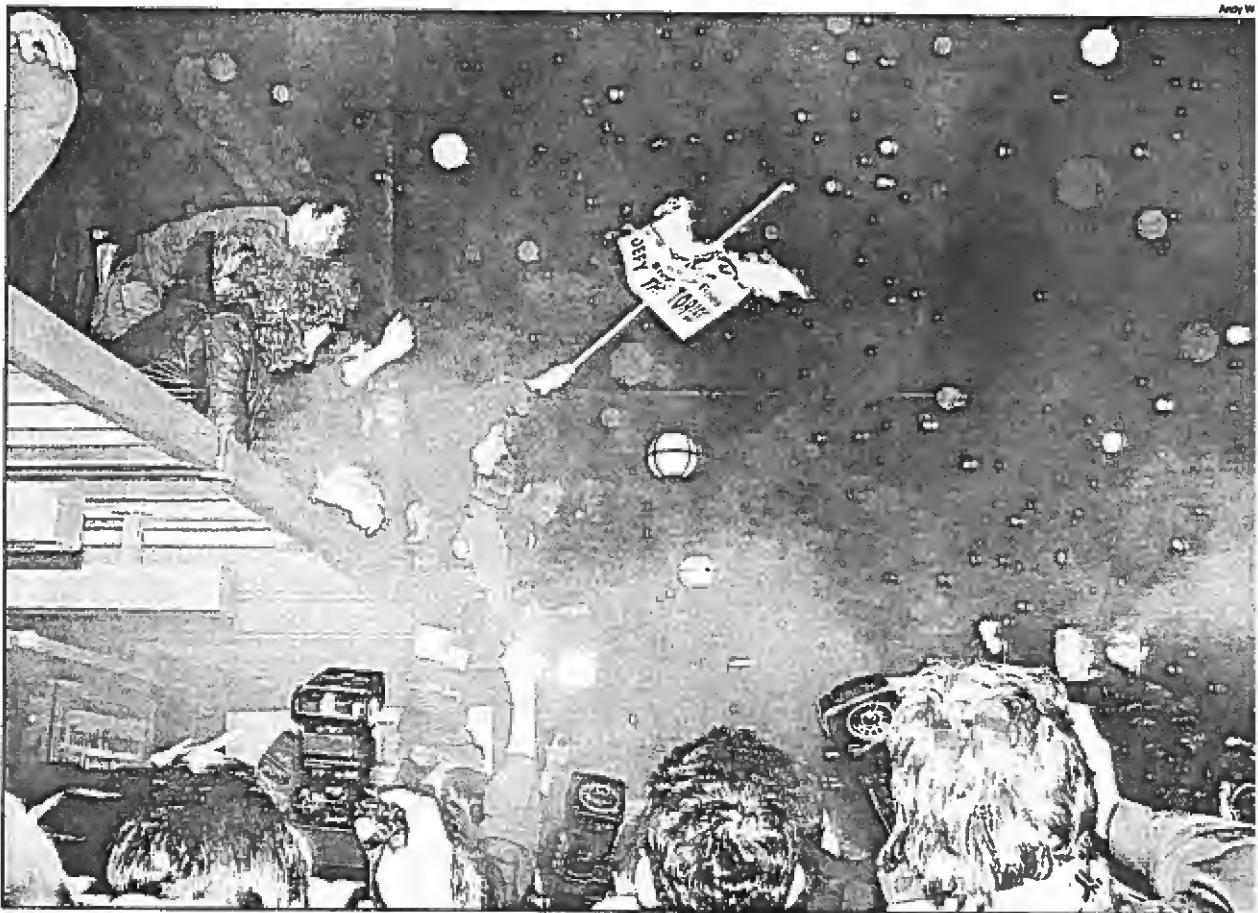
The film centre has its own air-conditioned computer room, living quarters, canteen, lecture rooms and dozens of offices, including a boardroom.

However, its most vital facility in the past few weeks has been a large and modern printing plant, Eastway Offset, which has been producing hundreds of thousands of anti-poll tax leaflets and posters.

The latest issue of Militant's weekly newspaper emphasises the movement's current preoccupation. Six of its 12 pages are given over to news on the poll tax campaign. There is a denial that Militant has inspired the violence of the last week, but a leader trumpets its key role: "Militant is proud that its supporters around the country have played a leading part in organising the local poll tax campaigns."

Other left-wing groups, such as the Socialist Workers' party and Class War, are now jumping on the Militant bandwagon.

An anarchist group called Hackney Solidarity was involved in Thursday's protest at Hackney town hall, in which 60 people were arrested and 20 police hurt, but there were even demonstrators claiming to represent the Revolutionary Communist party of Turkey.



Uproar in the streets: Friday night's scenes of poll tax mayhem outside Lambeth town hall in southeast London, where police in riot gear were pelted by demonstrators and a patrol car was overturned

Hatton men's secret links

A LARGE double-fronted, distressed shop on a prominent street in central Liverpool is the headquarters of the Merseyside Anti-Poll Tax Federation. It is from here that the 35 local anti-tax unions are coordinated, demonstrations organised, and student "Can't pay - Won't pay" pamphlets and posters distributed.

What many passing shoppers will not know is that this part of the anti-poll tax campaign is being subsidised by Labour-led Liverpool city council, which will have to pay those people who follow the slogan's advice and refuse to pay their community charge.

The shop, the former base of a security and building contractor, is council property, and was given rent-free to the campaign in January. Its rental value is estimated at £5,000 a year.

The move was proposed by Kevin Coombes, the council leader, after a delegation from the campaign went to visit him in his council office.

With other recent contrived decisions, it has again raised the question of how much council money is being used to subsidise the campaign three years after the completion of Derek Hatton and other Militant members.

The prominence of activists in the local anti-poll tax campaign also underlines the continuing strength of Militant in Liverpool as a whole, the city of its birth.

Peter Kilroy, the Labour party's northwest regional organiser and a long-time campaigner against Militant, said: "Militant has regrouped within Liverpool because it has been marginalised elsewhere. We ignore its current influence at our peril."

On 22nd October, 22, is the national day of protest for the All-Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation. He is a Labour party member, but freely admits that he is a Militant supporter and has sold its newspaper "from time to time."

Sitting in the sparsely furnished campaign headquarters, he also confirms that Militant supporters have played a prominent role in the campaign from the beginning, and occupy influential positions within it.

"But the federation is made up of all shades of opinion - including people who have voted Tory all their lives, and people who have never been political in any shape or form," said Coombes, predicting that 100,000 people in Liverpool will be expected to pay. "Who did he do that for?" he asks, but he has since written for the Militant newspaper on poll tax. Half of the contact names on the Merseyside campaign bulletin are known members or supporters of Militant, and of the six trade union branches quoted by Coombes as having given money or support, five are known Militant strongholds.

Despite the campaign's strong Militant links, and its opposition to the national Labour party line, Coombes defends the council decision to give it premises.

"The poll tax is so divisive and so bloody awful that I think people need as much guidance and as much protection from it as possible," he said, while stressing that he will be pushing for implementation of the tax when the council agrees to set the rate.

Other local councillors, however, have led some leading Labour councillors to question Coombes's affiliations. Most notable was his support for the appointment of Tony Mulhearn, Militant founder, and Frank Mills, disqualified councillor, to £15,000 jobs as Euro-election officers, which led to 24 councillors breaking the party whip to block it.

"We are very concerned about Coombes's connections with the Militant Tendency. We are seriously considering removing him as leader at the May elections," said one prominent member of the progressive left grouping, which opposes the tax. "I don't know if that's the end of the matter."

Coombes admits that his handling of the Mulhearn and Mills issue was "probably insensitive," but denies the suggestion that he is a Militant "stooge."

"One of the complaints that people make about me is that they are never critically sure what I am going to do or what I am going to say, because I am my own man," he said.

Labour moderates put Coombes under pressure last week by attacking him from voting on his budget proposals. The opposition from the left, however, was not enough to solidify his position on his own position may be under threat.

The 24 rebels are being targeted by Militant activists in the run-up to elections for the May local government elections, with moves already under way to unseat them.

Six activists were recently moved into one ward to try to swing the balance and take control of key positions in the local party. Elsewhere, fears are that the Broadgreen constituency party, twice suspended in the past because of Militant activity, will again fall to Militant at its annual meeting at the end of the month.

For some, the prospect of a Militant-dominated council is a nightmare. "It's a very real thing," said a local Labour councillor. "If we had luck, we could see that lot back in control again after May," said one moderate councillor.

But Richard Vernon, Militant's Merseyside spokesman, said of its part in the anti-poll tax campaign: "We are proud of the role we have played in boosting Labour's position in the opinion polls and giving the party a 20-point lead."

Height reporting team: Maurice Chittenden, John Davidson, Peter Hourman, Andrew Smith and Christopher Ward

SUNDAY TIMES 11.3.90



A poll tax protester takes advantage of a face-to-face confrontation with Mr Tom Savoury, the leader of Plymouth City Council, while in Hackney, east London, demonstrators make themselves heard from the street outside the town hall

HACKNEY is where last week an unstable mix of political extremism and public frustration created an explosion not seen since the worst days of the miners' strike and Wapping.

Protest marches and demonstrations had been merely a dress rehearsal for the ugly scenes which erupted in the North London borough on Thursday when seasoned agitators seized upon the anger of the large crowd and turned it against the police.

The event had been prepared with the professionalism of protesters well versed in the art of exploiting the issue of the moment. For a week or more fly-posters advertising Hackney council's crucial poll tax-setting meeting had been appearing on walls, hoardings and bus stops all around the borough.

Agitators were strategically placed to hand out protest placards to the angry residents of Hackney who made up most of the crowd. Trained trouble-makers — from Trotskyist groups such as Militant, the Socialist Workers' Party and the Workers' Revolutionary Party — whipped up anti-poll fervour. Then, their work done, most of the agitators escaped down side streets and into the night before the police could catch up with them.

Of the 56 arrests, 29 were of people from Hackney, 15 from other parts of North London, and 10 from the rest of the capital. Only two

were from other parts of the country — Cambridge and Birmingham.

The SWP played a prominent role. Many of the posters bore the imprint of the London printers — East End Offset Ltd — which produces much of its propaganda material. Extracts from the SWP leaflet read: "We should publicly burn poll tax forms" and "Some Tories have expressed fears about civil disobedience. Let's give them civil disobedience."

4 Britain is witnessing the first major civil disobedience campaign since the suffragettes?

Tony Benn

dience at a level they haven't even dreamt of."

But who precisely were the people who comprised the mob? Was it all the fault of professional troublemakers? Or were they being blamed by the Conservative party hierarchy for a genuine outbreak of public anger? Were they being used in an attempt to blacken a resurgent Labour party?

The Government, and to some extent the police, are adamant that

the maverick was the work of a hard core of highly organised Trotskyist activists, and anarchist groups such as Class War.

It is true that the initial trouble in front of the town hall was the work of a 200-strong core, many waving Militant and SWP placards. But it is not true that this group made up the mob responsible for the window smashing and looting that came later.

Its main intention was to destroy rather than steal. What looting took place occurred mainly after the mob had done its deed. It looked far more like opportunism.

On the steps of the town hall, in front of the police lines, both Militant and the SWP had several leaders equipped with megaphones, to whip up as much frenzy as possible. At the heart of the crowd a vociferous core duly responded with chants and missiles.

But meanwhile the vast majority of the crowd was there only to protest peacefully outside the town hall. They did not shout. They did not commit acts of violence. One thing was clear however: few intended to pay the poll tax even if it meant going to prison.

It was the 150 people or so at the

by Nicholas Farrell
and Victoria Macdonald

heart of the crowd confronting the police lines who were the worst behaved outside the town hall. They were the ones who threw the bottles, cans and placards. It was they who shouted loudest. It was they who grappled and fought with police. It was they who pressed forward.

The mob began its destructive flight away from the town hall and into the Narrow Way when police moved out into the adjacent Mare Street, where traffic had been brought to a standstill, to disperse the crowd.

Among the shards of broken glass, it left evidence of its flight of destruction, like calling cards in the shape of copies of Militant's newspaper, a pink hand-out on Hackney's "Library Crisis", the SWP's "Break the Tories' Poll Tax" leaflet, and another from ACT UP, London Women's Group on safe sex for lesbians.

There were dramatic eye witness accounts: — the driver of a number 30 bus, Mr Gary Neale, 27, from Basildon, Essex, was stuck in the

traffic jam as the mob swept up the Narrow Way and around his bus.

He said: "I said to this demonstrator: 'I hate Thatcher too. I hate the poll tax just like you. You have made my night.'"

"He stood in front of the bus and moved people around it telling them to leave it alone."

Does that mean it was an organised mob with a predetermined plan to destroy? Mr Neale added: "I recognised many of the faces — all local people from around here. You see them as you are driving your bus round."

"The bloke I spoke to was white, aged around 25, with short blond hair. There were a few with scarves round their faces. They might have been Militants or what have you. Most of them were not so much teenagers as 18 to 30."

The barman at the Crown pub at the top of the Narrow Way, Mr Colin Crow, watched as the mob swept past the windows. He said: "They were white, early 20s. I saw one with blond punkish hair throw a brick through the shop next door. He was wearing a green Dutch army type jacket and black canvas or dark jeans. They came in bunches of 20 to 30. They were

wearing boots and stuff from army surplus stores.

"They were shouting and laughing when they heard a smashing of glass somewhere. Most of the looters were black, the trouble-makers white. It looked like a throw-back to the days of punk rock."

One man, who would not give his name, but said he was 27, a driver,

4 I believe in the law. If a socialist government passes laws I don't like, I have to obey them?

Margaret Thatcher

and lived in a Hackney council flat, was at the heart of the crowd in front of the town hall when the trouble started. He said that police had "beaten up" his brother.

He added: "I ain't a member of anything. I just won't pay the poll tax. Most of us here are Hackney residents. I'd say 65 per cent, the rest aren't."

"All that's happened is the police have given us a good kicking. Nothing's been achieved here tonight really."

"I'm paying £40 a week on rent and rates. With poll tax it will be £56. That's big money. I've got two young kids."

A young man, who said he lived in Hackney in a condemned council flat and was a student, said: "If these groups like Militant and SWP come out and it's against the poll tax, that's good enough for me." But as the council continued its deliberations and the crowd screamed and jostled outside, nearby a baby in a pram lay asleep with a Pay No Poll Tax poster as a pillow.

Twenty-four hours later, Militant and the SWP were again on hand, this time in Lambeth, where angry residents are facing the highest poll tax in Britain. But, unlike Hackney, there was little evidence that they were manipulating the crowd. The violence which resulted in nearly 30 arrests, an overturned police car and several police baton charges, appeared to be a spontaneous eruption of local anger — although one local resident, comparing it with previous outbreaks of violence in Britain, called Friday's events "a designer riot."

But one thing is clear from the week's outbreaks: poll tax is a subject so emotive it creates anger right across the political spectrum. Skilled agitators only need to light the blue touch paper for fireworks to ensue — although they can never be sure how fierce will be the resulting explosion.

Anti-Poll Tax Federation condemns 'idiots'



The All-Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation, which has been linked in the media with last week's violence at Hackney and Lambeth, has come out strongly against the 'handful of idiots' who provoked the disturbances.

The Federation's press officer, John Rathbone, told *City Limits*: 'We oppose the violence unequivocally. The only way to defeat the poll tax is through mass non-payment - there is no other method.'

Mr Rathbone defended lobbies of councillors and peaceful occupations

of Town Halls as 'a legitimate form of democratic protest,' and warned that councils - like Hackney - which locked out demonstrators, bore a measure of responsibility for their anger. He contrasted Hackney's refusal to let in protestors, with Lambeth's decision to let in a spokesman from the Federation, to speak at Friday night's meeting, while relaying the debate to the crowd outside over a PA system. He also singled out Hillingdon Council as a 'model' example of how to treat protestors. 'We stopped their first meeting peace-

fully,' he said. 'This time they gave facilities for 1,200 people to view it; there was no violence whatsoever.'

Mr Rathbone said the 'Carnival' atmosphere of Friday night's Brixton protest was spoiled by 'a few idiots' who threw petrol bombs and beer bottles at the police. He said whoever turned a police car over, in Hackney, was 'well out of order'. But he also accused the police of arresting people indiscriminately and brutally.

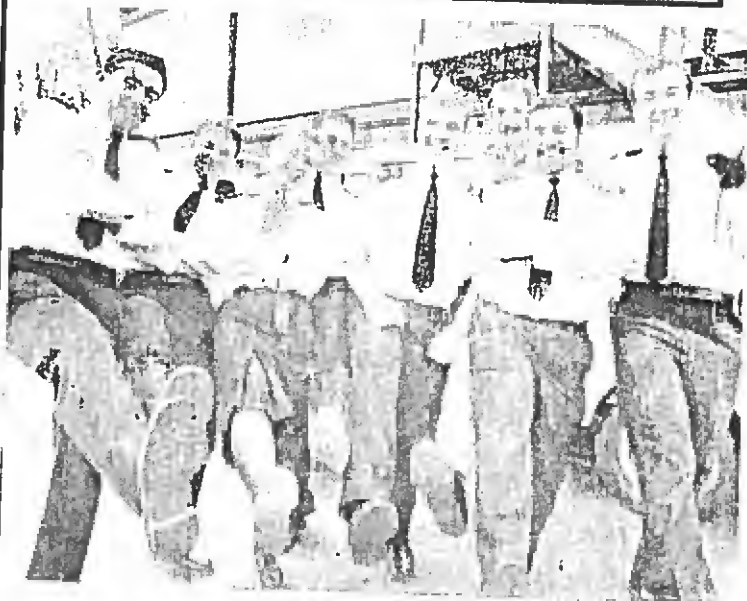
A team of legal observers operating under the umbrella of the National Council for Civil Liberties, was on hand in Brixton on Friday night, and among the incidents they were close to was an officer in riot gear who was seen repeatedly striking a *Guardian* journalist, Jocelyn Targett, with his shield. The crowd also saw a police officer gesticulate from inside a van, as it drove off after an arrest had been made at Stockwell Green. In Hackney, the night before, the Hackney Community Defence Association handed out a phone number to ring - 2490193 - for anyone who was arrested, or who witnessed an arrest.

At least 25,000 people are expected to join the national demonstration against the poll tax on Saturday March 31. The march, from Kennington Park to Trafalgar Square, begins at noon. Tickets for an anti-poll tax benefit - co-sponsored by *City Limits* - at Brixton Academy on March 30, are available from the Academy (326 1022), South Bank Poly (261 1525), Kingsway College (837 4641), and Rough Trade (240 0105). Tickets are £8 and £5 (concessions).

QUENTIN McDERMOTT

CL 15.3.90

Cops climb every mountain



MEET Busby's Babes - the cheery coppers who are prepared to climb every mountain to help sick children.

Sgt Jim Busby is planning to take a team of 13 officers from Hackney police station to Wales for a sponsored climb of three peaks - Snowdon, Cadair Idris, and Crid Goch.

The cash raised will go to buy a baby heartbeat monitor for Queen Elizabeth Children's Hospital in Hackney Road.

Already they've got £4,000 - and

they hope to have lots more by the time they go on the climb.

Sgt Busby, 29, first got involved raising money for QEH when he was a constable at Bethnal Green.

Now he's hoping to make the sponsored climb an annual event.

Pictured above limbering up for the climb with Sgt Busby are PCs John Lester, Terry Howes, Steve Martin, Mark Godfrey, Gerry Campbell, and Mick Pugh, and WPC Lynn Shepherd.

Police move to quell race clash at demonstration

POLICE made 14 arrests after clashes between members of the ultra-right wing British National Party and anti-racist groups at a demonstration on Sunday afternoon.

Nearly 500 police were drafted into Bethnal Green as trade unions and anti-racist groups staged a rally in protest at a "Rights for Whites" march organised by the BNP.

The march in protest at the stabbing of Morpeth school pupil John Stoner was due to end at Bethnal Green Town Hall, Patriot Square, but around 300 anti-racists gathered outside to block their path.

To prevent a clash the 200 marchers, some as young as 10, shouting "white power" and chanting "Rule Britannia," were routed along

Roman Road. The streets were lined with police and the march was shadowed by a police helicopter.

Officers acted quickly to arrest a marcher after he spat at a woman who accused the demo of stirring up racial hatred.

Majority

The majority of arrests came as the marchers filed back to Bethnal Green Road after a speech from ex-National Front leader John Tyndall just off Grove Road.

None of the Stoner family, including grandfather George Happe who organised a previous march, was present on Sunday.

Spitalfields Labour councillor Abbas Uddin hailed the day as a victory over racism.



● Abbas Uddin: victory claim.

"Our community is not prepared to be intimidated by fascist thugs. Sunday will be remembered for the unity black and white local people against racism and fascism he said.

Poll tax: counting the cost

HACKNEY was this week counting the cost of the poll tax after last Thursday's demonstration outside the Town Hall.

For shopkeepers, it means higher insurance premiums following violence and looting which devastated 42 premises, causing tens of thousands of pounds worth of damage.

For Town Hall bosses it means uncertainty after union leaders threatened to make poll tax collection unworkable in the borough. And for every adult in

Hackney it means a bill for £499 will be dropping through their letter-boxes within the next two weeks.

Fifty-seven people were arrested during the demonstration, in which 40 police officers were injured. Politicians and anti-poll tax organisations moved quickly this week to condemn the violence.

Meanwhile, organised opposition to the poll tax in Hackney is growing.

● For comprehensive coverage of the issues, and the violence, see pages 10 & 11.

Sedgemore slams the Met's immigrant checks

HACKNEY South MP Brian Sedgemore has hit out at Metropolitan Police officers who abuse their powers by stopping black people for trivial offences and detain them for lengthy periods to run immigration checks on them.

Mr Sedgemore claims 6,000 people a year are subjected to police harassment after immigration checks reveal they are law-abiding citizens with the right of abode in this country.

Last week he held a top-

level meeting with Home Secretary David Waddington to complain that the police's conduct over immigration checks was damaging community relations and was offensive to black people.

Mr Waddington promised to investigate. He also heard Mr Sedgemore complain that the Metropolitan Police had refused to

co-operate with a study on the force's efficiency.

"The Met Police are one of the most inefficient organisations in Britain and they're accountable to no-one," said Mr Sedgemore. "They're the most expensive police force in Britain. Their clear-up rate is abysmal and no-one really checks that we get value for money."

Race demo murder: solicitor in appeal for witnesses

THE SOLICITOR representing the three Bangladeshi teenagers charged with attempted murder after an East End race demonstration has appealed for witnesses to the incident to come forward.

The three - Malik Miah, 18, Abdul Halim, 17, and a 16-year-old who cannot be identified - were arrested after the stabbing of John Swimney, 35, in the area of Harford Street and Ben Jonson Road, Stepney, on Saturday, February 24.

The incident followed a march by white residents in protest at the stabbing of Morpeth schoolboy John Stoner, 17,

earlier that month. Now the East London Workers Against Racism group has set up the "Stepney Three Campaign".

It is calling for the release of the teenagers, an end to alleged "police harassment of Asian families", and a campaign to halt the "dramatic increase in racist attacks in Tower Hamlets during the last 18 months".

The family of Malik Miah quit their

flat on the Clichy Estate, Stepney, after his father had his leg broken in an attack by a white gang in 1986.

Malik's brother, Mukith, needed 26 stitches in a razor wound when he was attacked in a Stepney churchyard.

The campaigners say any information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Solicitors Christian Fisher and Co can be contacted on 379 6928.

HC 16.3.90

derision: attacks

I'll pay my tax, says MP

"It would be nice to see a revolution in Britain, but it is my considered view that it will not happen." So said Brian Sedgmore, who was loudly jeered by 500 people at the Town Hall on Monday when he confirmed he would be paying his poll tax.

The meeting was called by Hackney Against The Poll Tax, which is co-ordinating a campaign of non-payment. But the MP for Hackney South said he believed the only way to get rid of the tax was by voting out the Tories at the next election.

"As a matter of political strategy I will be paying, but it is up to people's own consciences as to whether or not they should pay it," he said.

Condemned

Hackney North MP Diane Abbott said she would decide whether to pay after next week's meeting of her local party.

Both MPs condemned Thursday's violence. Mr Sedgmore blamed it on "a small group of male, white, middle-class anarchists," while Ms Abbott has put down a House of Commons motion blaming it on Mrs Thatcher, who she described as "the real urban terrorist."



A The lull before the storm: Protesters and police come face to face on the steps of Hackney Town Hall.

but it couldn't be heard inside the council chamber.

There, the atmosphere was strangely subdued. When the meeting began, just one person sat on the Liberal Democrat benches - four were at the Assembly Hall to see their leader, Paddy Ashdown, address a public meeting.

The 25 demonstrators allowed in the public gallery were mostly quiet, a single bag of flour hurled across the council chamber the only visible sign of protest.

As for the councillors, they continually streamed from the chamber to peer out of the windows at the scenes taking place in the street.

The poll tax was set barely 90 minutes after the meeting began - remarkably quickly, but then the councillors realised that, that night, the real action was happening outside the council chamber.

VIPs victims of the demo



▲ GLENYS Kinnock (above), wife of the Labour Party leader, was reciting poetry at the International Women's Day event at the Hackney Empire while violence and looting was going on outside. At the height of the trouble the front doors were barred to prevent the audience going out - and the demonstrators getting in.

PADDY Ashdown (right) was forced to abandon a meeting in Hackney Town Hall Assembly Rooms after 100 anti-poll tax demonstrators invaded the hall and shouted him down.

The Liberal Democrat leader was there to launch his party's local election platform, but his speech was drowned out. Afterwards, he went on television to condemn the tactics of the demonstrators.

Hackney Liberal Democrat, Cllr Colin Beadle, condemned the way Labour councillors had arranged for the poll tax meeting to coincide with Mr Ashdown's visit, which had been organised several



months earlier.

"The Militant Tendency is acknowledged to be an integral part of the Labour Party, so I feel the Labour group bears much of the responsibility for the suppression of free speech in Hackney on Thursday evening," he said.

Fines fund to be established

A FUND is to be set up to pay the fines and legal costs of the 37 people arrested at Thursday's demonstration.

Hackney Against The Poll Tax is co-ordinating the appeal for those facing charges that include burglary, assault, theft, possession of offensive weapons and public order offences.

Hackney Community Defence Association, the police watchdog group, has been assisting the legal defence of those arrested. They are

appealing for witnesses to arrests to contact them on 249 0193.

They have interviewed 20 of those arrested, and plan to produce a document within the month on how the arrests were carried out.

Martin Walker, of HCDA, told the Gazette: "We are concerned about the level of force used by the police in carrying out arrests. We feel some of those arrested may have grounds for a civil case against the police."

We can stop the poll tax

AS A member of Hackney North branch of the Socialist Workers Party, I would like to make a few points about last Thursday's demonstration.

We do not believe that looting or rioting will defeat poll tax, but we will not condemn those who react angrily to the violence of Tory attacks. These include savage cuts in the NHS, vicious anti-union laws and the poll tax.

We can stop the poll tax. Hackney Council should not do the Tories' dirty work. We call on council workers not to collect and Hackney people not to pay the poll tax. - V. LEHAL, MONTAGUE ROAD, DALSTON.

□... May I take the opportunity of both commending and congratulating Mr Jerry White, Hackney Council's chief executive, for his prompt inspection and walkabout in the Narrows the morning after the rioting.

Mr White's attitude reflects the high standards expected from senior council officers and one can only wish this was mirrored at member level. - STEPHEN SCOTT, MARE STREET, HACKNEY.

□... There were outsiders at last Thursday's lobby - the police, very few of whom live in Hackney; the private security firm that had occupied the Town Hall with their vicious dogs, and the press and TV. The members of the three branches of the Socialist Workers Party in Hackney all live in the borough and are active in the local Labour movement.

There is violence in Hackney - the daily violence of an uncaring system on the people of the poorest borough in Britain. The poll tax will have a catastrophic effect on many in Hackney, particularly families with adult children at home. The Tory government is responsible for this violence, and the Labour Party leadership is responsible for failing to fight it effectively. - COLIN POOLE, SECRETARY, HACKNEY SOUTH BRANCH, SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY.

□... How to pay the poll tax:

1: Write out a cheque for £499, date it March 31, 1991, and guard the cheque stub

with your life.

2: Deliver it in person to Hackney Council and get a receipt. By law they must give you this.

3: Wait for the bureaucracy to lose your cheque before they can cash it. - MIKE KILLINGWORTH, SEVEN SISTERS ROAD, FINSBURY PARK.

□... The article in last week's Gazette about the Poll Tax Legal Group's "anti-poll tax cheque book" is misleading in two ways.

First, I would like to make it clear that PTLG are not telling people to pay poll tax - the cheque book aims to point out to those choosing to pay the tax that there are still ways of making a protest.

Secondly, PTLG are not "Hackney's anti-poll tax campaigners". The group is providing an advice and information service about the legal aspects of poll tax.

I would like to make it perfectly clear that I personally believe non-payment of poll tax is not only a legitimate form of protest, but also a necessary one. - LEN LUCAS, POLL TAX LEGAL GROUP.

□... Last week's Gazette highlighted the difference between Labour-controlled Hackney and Liberal Democrat-controlled Tower Hamlets. While Hackney has raised rents by over £3 and set the poll tax at £499, Tower Hamlets has increased rent by £1.95 and set the poll tax at £297.

Surely this clearly shows that when Liberal Democrats control an authority, not only do they provide the services they were elected for, but they also give value for money at the same time. - DAVID J. COLLINS, LAVENDER GROVE, DALSTON.

HG 16.3.90



© Niall Mulvihill - violence orchestrated.

Police 'the real targets'

THURSDAY'S violence was organised by extremists who were looking for trouble, says Hackney police chief Niall Mulvihill, the man in charge of the 300 officers on duty then.

"I am absolutely convinced that there were agitators from both within and without the borough," he said.

"A small but significant minority of the crowd who stood themselves directly in front of the Town Hall steps were clearly acting in concert and had come to cause trouble."

"I am convinced the majority of the violence was orchestrated."

Provoked
Chief Superintendent Mulvihill denied that the heavy police presence had provoked trouble. He believes some of the demonstrators, armed with missiles, paint-filled bottles and truncheons, were determined to cause trouble - and would have disrupted the meeting. "The average, decent Hackney citizen who attended did so legitimately to exercise a democratic protest against the community charge. But their intended peaceful demonstration was subverted by agitators who had come for one reason only - to attack the police," he said.

Shops bear the brunt

SHOPKEEPERS in Mare Street were this week counting the cost of Thursday's demonstration, with damage running into tens of thousands of pounds.

A total of 42 shops, mostly along the Narrows, had their windows smashed, including McDonald's, Mothercare and Marks and Spencer. Clothes, televisions and videos were among the goods looted from stores.

Now owners are fearful that their insurance costs will rocket as a result of the damage.

The owners of the Marian restaurant in Lower Clapton Road said: "We are very worried. Insurance



is certain to become more expensive and more difficult to obtain."

Jerry White, Hackney Council's chief executive, visited damaged shops last Friday morning. The council has said it will provide "any assistance within its

power" to local traders whose premises were damaged.

© Above: The clearing-up operations begin... work starts on repairs to a shop window, smashed during last Thursday night's orgy of violence.

Council 'could have been heroes'

THE Hackney Against The Poll Tax Federation is gathering strength, with 15 anti-poll tax unions already set up in the borough and a number of community groups, tenants' associations and trade unions affiliated.

This week HAPT chair Elizabeth Short stressed that their campaign was peaceful - and extended sympathy to the shopkeepers who suffered damage and looting last week.

"Small shopkeepers are among those hardest hit by the poll tax, and many have been very supportive of our campaign," she said.

She was critical of the way Hackney Council has handled the poll tax issue. "If the council hadn't hired security guards, if they had stood on the Town Hall steps and shown solidarity with the people, they would have faced cheering crowds and been the heroes of the hour," she said.

Steve Nally, secretary of the All Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation, called on Mrs Thatcher to resign and fight an election over the issue. He told a meeting at Hackney Town Hall: "We never have and never will advocate violence. The only way to defeat the poll tax is for tens of thousands of people not to pay."

© Forthcoming anti-poll tax meetings: King's Park APTU meets at 7.30pm on Tuesday; Holmleigh Road Estate Against The Poll Tax meets at 7.30pm on March 26 at the Oak Tree Community Centre in Bethune Road; and Hackney Against The Poll Tax meets the third Tuesday of every month at 7.30pm at the Old Fire Station in Lewin Road, Stoke Newington.

© POLL TAX TIT-BIT: Hackney Council's trades unions are calling for a one-day strike in the first week of April to protest against the poll tax and cuts in council services. The Town Hall's joint shop stewards committee is asking council workers to support them by refusing to take action against residents who refuse to pay.

A tax of of hate.

A CROWD of 5,000 people built up outside Hackney Town Hall on Thursday of last week. Most had come to protest against those who represent them - the councillors.

Some had come to attack the people they pay to protect them - the police.

The Town Hall was ready for trouble: private security guards with dogs had been patrolling the building since the start of the day; windows had been boarded up; and workers with mobility disabilities were sent home in the morning.

As the day wore on, some Town Hall workers began to worry about their safety and walked out. The rest were sent home at around 3pm as the council prepared for its stormiest meeting of the year.

At issue was the poll tax bill, due to be set at £499 - £220 more than the recommended government target. Among the demonstrators were those who couldn't pay, those who wouldn't pay, and council workers angry at the level of cuts being made.

Gazette News special

As the crowds massed in front of the Town Hall, there was anger that the number of demonstrators being allowed into the public gallery had been limited to 25.

Among those unable to gain entry were staff from the Hackney Media Resources Project, due to be at the meeting and unable to make

© POLL TAX TIT-BIT: Bus drivers caught up in the Mare Street demonstration abandoned their vehicles and fled for cover to Hackney garage, London Buses reported. None of the buses were damaged.

their protest. And former mayor Betty Stanke was in the forefront of angry demonstrators on the Town Hall steps.

Members of Hackney Community Defence Association mingled with the crowd, handing out leaflets giving advice on what to do if arrested. For many, this was to turn out to be invaluable.

The shouting and chanting outside the Town Hall built up into a thunderous noise -

Violent scenes repeated in Islington

ISLINGTON'S poll tax was set at £498 on Monday. Around 2,000 people took part in a demonstration outside the Town Hall in Upper Street. Forty-five were arrested during clashes with police.

Both police and Islington Against The Poll Tax blamed the violence on outside agitators.

Six officers and one protester were treated for injuries. Council leader Margaret Hodge was hit by a three-inch nail, and the meeting was suspended for 10 minutes following disruption by 40 demonstrators in the public gallery. Three Labour councillors vowed they would not pay the poll tax on April 1.



© Mounted police in action outside Islington Town Hall.

Gazette letters special

HERE IS A SELECTION OF THE MANY LETTERS RECEIVED BY THE GAZETTE ABOUT LAST THURSDAY'S LOBBY AND ABOUT THE POLL TAX ITSELF. IT HAS BEEN NECESSARY TO ABBREVIATE THEM TO INCLUDE AS MANY AS POSSIBLE.

IS what we saw last Thursday the face of Hackney in the 1990s? Anarchy, rioting on the streets, scenes of violence, public disorder?

Hackney born and bred, I was filled with shame at the behaviour I witnessed outside the Town Hall.

I went along to register my protest over poll tax and listen to the democratic debate of our loony Left-wing Labour-controlled council in justifying the implementation of this new taxation and their explanation for the excessive figures arrived at.

But it was not so - the debate took place behind "closed" and boarded-up doors. I was disgusted at being denied my democratic right to enter the Town Hall.

I felt I was witnessing scenes of despair as forecast by George Orwell in 1984 - or did it remind me more of Hitler in 1934? - MAURICE OWEN, FOUNTAYNE ROAD, STOKE NEWINGTON.

©... What a disgrace to see mobs of Militant and Socialist Workers members attacking our police. One woman interviewed on radio categorised the police, who were completely outnumbered. Many of the protesters appeared to be under the age of 18.

When the people of Hackney are invited to air their opinions at meetings arranged by Hackney police, only a dozen or so take the trouble to attend.



© The face of Hackney in the 1990s?

Anarchy filled me with shame

Our local police are doing a wonderful job with many officers giving up their spare time to help in youth clubs and other organisations.

I was born in Hackney, went to school here and work here. I have been a Hackney ratepayer for over 45 years. The real people of Hackney do not deserve the bad publicity that is so prevalent. -

L.R. WYNN, DALSTON LANE, DALSTON.

©... We have heard a lot in the media about the violence that took place. It should be pointed out that the vast majority of people who attended the lobby were ordinary local people who turned up to question their councillors and peacefully voice their opposition to poll tax.

The main blame for any trouble lies at the door of the Tory government for introducing this vicious tax, which will make 22 million people worse off. Having to pay £499 on top of rent increases is simply the last straw for many - no wonder people get angry.

The council should also shoulder its share of the

blame. The massive police presence, barriers and security men with guard dogs inside the building denied people their democratic right to lobby councillors. Only 40 were allowed. Why didn't the council move the meeting to a bigger venue or at least set up a public address system to relay what was happening inside to those outside?

We condemn those who threw things at the police and smashed up shops. The poll tax is not defeated by a campaign of non-payment. We call on Hackney Council to support us by refusing to collect the poll tax and by refusing to prosecute those who refuse to pay it. - BILL WYNN, CHAIR, KINGS PARK ANTI-POLL TAX UNION.

©... On behalf of the Federation of Hackney Tenants' Associations, we wish to disassociate ourselves from the violence and looting at the anti-poll tax demonstration. We and our affiliated tenants' associations were out in force to show the council of our united front against poll tax and the high increase in council rents.

This we will carry on in a peaceful and positive manner. - DON WALLER, SECRETARY, FEDERATION OF HACKNEY TENANTS' ASSOCIATIONS.

© More BH facing page

HG 16.3.90

POLICE FOOT THE BILL FOR POLL TAX RIOT



For Pete's sake, Kath!

HERE, treacle, what's my Kath doing hobnobbing with the Old Bill? Keeping it in the family, that's what - because WPC Kim Taylor is none other than the sister of EastEnders star Gillian. To find out what they're doing together, turn to page 3.

POLICE are to pay out tens of thousands of pounds to shopkeepers who had their windows smashed and stores looted in the Hackney poll tax riot.

A little known piece of legislation, the Riot Act of 1886, makes the police liable to pay compensation for houses and shops which are robbed or damaged because of such a disturbance.

And this week, the demonstration outside the Town Hall on March 8 - which led to 42 shops being smashed up and looted - was officially declared a riot by the Receiver of the Metropolitan Police.

Deadline

Police have been circulating promises along the Haggerston, where most of the rioting occurred, to tell shopkeepers of their rights.

But they were told they had just 14 days from the date of the riot to make their claim for damages.

The deadline expired yesterday (Thursday).

FOR POLL TAX RIOT

Ruling means shopkeepers will cop the demo loot

by MAX VELODY

Traders were delighted at the news.

Chris Fitzgibbon, assistant manager of the Abbey National Building Society, told the Gazette: "We had our laminated glass window smashed in the dispute. Now we won't have to claim under our insurance."

Hackney Council was this week urging shopkeepers to ensure their claims were in on time.

A council spokesperson said: "We have telephoned the police and asked them to make sure all shops are aware of their rights to claim under this Act."

The council was supported by Hackney North MP, Diane Abbott, who said: "I would

urge all shopkeepers to claim."

Hackney is the only borough of the many which suffered violence - there were 37 people arrested - to have had a poll tax demonstration classified as a riot. Shopkeepers in Haringey and Islington will be unable to claim under the Act.

Hackney police were unavailable for comment as the Gazette went to press.

Pubs launch drugs purge

TEENY BOOZERS and drug abusers beware. Hackney South Pub Watch was launched this week to clamp down on under-age drinking and drug-taking in pubs.

The campaign, centred around Mare Street, Well Street, Victoria Park Road and Morning Lane, has the full backing of pub governors and Hackney police.

Landlords will be making a greater effort to keep out under-age customers and to discourage drug dealers from using the pubs. Uniformed cops will be in greater evidence.

Welcoming the new initiative, Inspector Tim Waterhouse told the Gazette: "This campaign by local publicans has the full support of the police who will maintain a high profile both in public houses and the vicinity."

"Some positive action will be taken when offences of this nature come to our notice."



Colin Roach - shotgun blast

Chart star dedicates album to family of Colin Roach

CHART-TOPPING singer Sinéad O'Connor has put the controversial death of Colin Roach back in the headlines with her number one album.

For the chart-busting "I Do Not Want What I Haven't Got" includes the dedication, "thanks to the Roach family," and the album features photos of Colin and his mom and dad.

And she adds the words: "God's place is the world, but the world is not God's place."

Now 23-year-old Sinéad hopes to revive interest in the seven-year-old case which sparked off a vigorous campaign and stormy demonstrations after the 21-year-old man died from a shotgun blast in the front office of Stoke Newington police station.

Suicide

Police said he committed suicide but his friends and families demanded an inquiry claiming he was murdered. And campaigners are now hoping that Sinéad will do a benefit gig.

The short-haired Irish star was moved to tears after seeing a photograph of Colin's parents, with his distraught mother holding a rose, outside the police station - and the photograph is shown on the album sleeve.

"That picture shattered her as she is a mother herself and she was moved by the look of anguish on his mum's face at having a son taken away before his time," said Sinéad's press agent at Chrysalis Records.

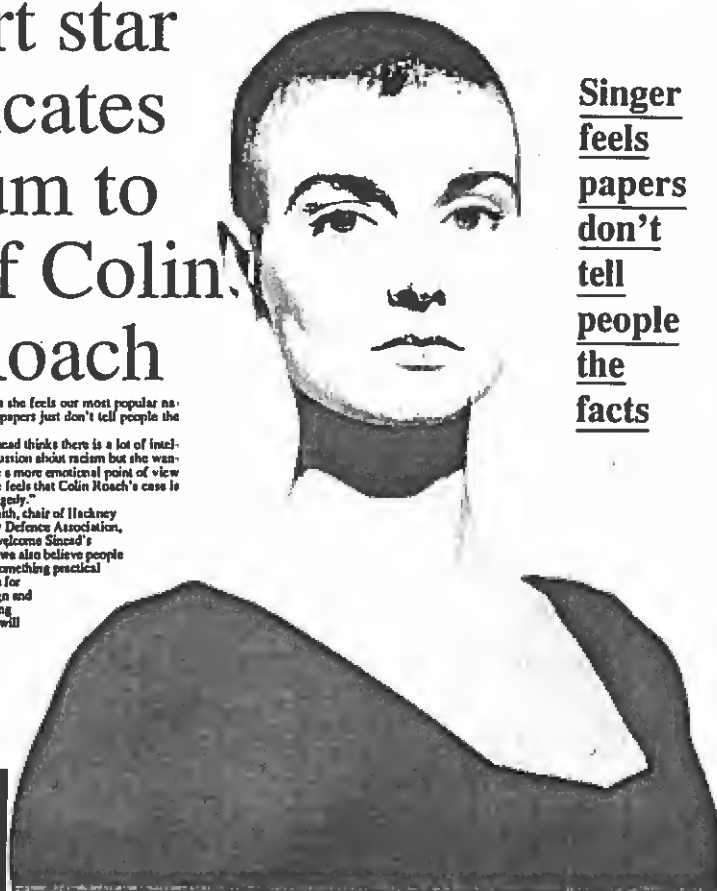
"She feels for the family and as a musician wants to do her bit to bring the case to people's attention. It is part of her stand against racism and Sinéad is greatly

disturbed as she feels our most popular national newspapers just don't tell people the facts.

"And Sinéad thinks there is a lot of intellectual discussion about racism but she wanted to make a more emotional point of view because she feels that Colin Roach's case is a human tragedy."

Graham Smith, chair of Hackney Community Defence Association, said: "We welcome Sinéad's gesture but we also believe people should do something practical and positive for the campaign and we are hoping that Sinéad will agree to do a benefit concert for us."

Report by Carol Dyce



Singer feels papers don't tell people the facts

Sinéad O'Connor - "God's place is the world, but the world is not God's place."

HG 23.3.90

Success for child sex abuse crackdown

THE prison doors clanged shut this week for David Barker and Mickey Gluckstead - convicted of horrific crimes against young children.

Hackney has had more than its fair share of ugly child abuse cases. The borough attracted national notoriety when it was revealed that the Paedophile Information Exchange was operating out of an address in Lower Clapton.

The killing of 14-year-old Woodberry Down rent boy Jason Swift in 1985 led to 17 men appearing before the Old Bailey, and the uncovering of a child sex network that included at least 35 youngsters.

And in December last year, 17-year-old Danny Palmer was jailed for life after battering his seven-month-old stepson Christopher to death in Finsbury Park.

This year 300 child abuse cases have been reported to Hackney police, around half of which involve sexual abuse. They are investigated by a special child protection squad of nine officers operating from offices behind Stoke Newington police station.

The man leading the team is Det Insp Eric Bowker, who in his 16 months in charge has chalked up a 90 per cent success rate in dealing with abuse cases.

He told the Gazette: "The key to the success we have had has been in working together with other agencies."

"In the past, police and social workers worked independently and made unilateral decisions about what action to take in individual cases."

"Now we plan our approach and aim to make collective decisions." Police and social workers are currently undergoing joint training programmes which should improve liaison further.

Close co-operation has been the key to securing convictions against child molesters. In the past it was often the case that police weren't called in until several days after a crime took place - too late for vital forensic evidence to be gathered.

Now police are called in immediately a suspected offence has taken place, and children are examined



● Det Insp Colin Bowker - heading the child protection squad.



● Tragic Christopher Palmer - battered to death.

by MAX VELODY

simultaneously by both a police surgeon and a child paediatrician.

Det Insp Bowker says it is vital to minimise the number of interviews and examinations endured by the young victims. "Sometimes the medical examination can be more traumatic than the actual offence."

The publicity generated by the Cleveland child abuse row and Esther Rantzen's *Childline* campaign has brought child abuse out into the open. But Det Insp Bowker believes a large number of cases remain unreported.

"The vast majority of abuse comes from

relatives or family friends. Of the 300 cases we had last year, I can think of just a handful where the victim did not know their attacker."

Working in the unit is stressful - especially for the officers, mostly women, who interview the children. "It can be especially taxing for them when they talk to children who we strongly believe to have been abused, but who haven't yet blurted out their story."

The child protection squad have a special confidential hotline for youngsters who believe they have been abused. It is manned from 8am-6pm - with an answering service operating after hours.

You can ring it on 488 7168.

Police pressed over Jamie Stewart report

FRESH questions are being asked about the controversial case of 22-year-old Stamford Hill electrician Jamie Stewart who died in Holloway police station in July last year.

An inquest in January decided that he was killed by a massive cocaine overdose after he was arrested late one night for an alleged driving offence.

Now members of Islington Council's police/community consultative group who accepted the verdict, say they are still concerned about how Mr Stewart

was arrested and treated in the police station.

Cllr Derek Sawyer, the group's chair, has written to the Police Complaints Authority (PCA) which has been investigating the death for the past eight months.

He wants to know what is the focus of the PCA's inquiries, what rank are the officers being investigated and when will it complete its report.

In the letter, Cllr Sawyer said of the inquest: "We were particularly disturbed by the evidence of the police pathologist as to the sheer extent of recent blood stains (on tables, walls and floors) at

Holloway police station."

Cllr Sawyer said more information would help to reassure community representatives and address the "deep emotions" aroused by Mr Stewart's death.

The inquest verdict failed to satisfy Mr Stewart's family whose solicitor claimed there were a number of discrepancies in the police's evidence.

The family has called for a full investigation into his death.

At the inquest, police claimed that Mr Stewart had become violent in the police station and had to be forcibly restrained.

Patience is the key say detectives

PATIENT detective work led to a 12-year jail sentence for a man who repeatedly raped a nine-year-old Hackney girl until she was 13, and committed acts of buggery on her seven-year-old brother.

Det Sgt Colin Gester, of Tower Hamlets child protection team, told the Gazette that a year of patient detective work finally resulted in the conviction at the Old Bailey last week of 43-year-old David Barker.

Proved

"One child made an allegation which could not be proved a year before. It was only when the confidence of the other children was won that we could proceed."

In the courtroom, Judge Brian Smedley told Barker: "What you did to these small children almost defies description. Over the years you sexually abused them in the most appalling way."

The court heard that Barker had threatened to hurt the girl's mother if she related him. The children have now been taken into care.

Barker was cleared of two other charges of attempted buggery and indecency with a boy of six.

● In a separate case, a 16-month-old schoolboy who had watched a school video called "Kids Can Say" broke down in front of his headmaster and revealed he had been sexually abused for four years.

The video, by Rolf Harris, encouraged children to tell if they were being assaulted and the 11-year-old broke his silence.

His courage in speaking out led to a nine-year jail sentence for buggery and indecent assault being passed at the Old Bailey on his attacker, East End "hard man" Mickey Gluckstead, of Stratford.

The court heard that Gluckstead "terrorised" the child into submitting to his wicked demands. One of his vile acts was to perform sex with an Italian dog and force the boy to watch.

Gluckstead, 41, was a former bare knuckle prizefighter and friend of some of London's toughest villains with a reputation as a "macho ladies' man."

EastEnders star Gillian teams up with her sisters

Empire charity night keeps it in the family

It's a fair cop as police tread the boards for some good causes

by MAX VELODY

COP a kind of that! EastEnders star Gillian Taylor-Firth treads the boards at the Hackney Empire on Monday... accompanied by sisters Debbie and Kim.

Gillian - known to millions as the gravel-voiced, long-suffering Kathy Beale in the BBC soap - will host-foot it over to Mare Street after filming the latest episode of *EastEnders* at Ebbw Vale studios.

It's the first time the three sisters have ever performed on stage together - despite many years in the theatre.

Kim, 32, was an actress for 12

years before joining it in to join the police force. She's now a WPC at Islington station specialising in youth and community work. Debbie, 37, is a former nursing officer who spent many years as part of the Islington Players theatre group.

They are appearing together in "It's A Fair Cop", a gala charity event put on by the police to raise money for St Joseph's Hospice, Cystic Fibrosis, and Multiple Sclerosis.

Among the 23 officers taking part in the show are Hackney Supt Dave Dugmore, Stoke Newington's answer to Reg Dixon, whose organ

recital will include songs from "Phantom Of The Opera."

And former top actress Eliza Horne, who quit showbiz to join Hackney police, will also be doing a star turn.

The Taylor-Firths will do two spots in the show, including the evergreen *Beverly Sisters'* standard, "Sisters."

Said Kim: "We've always loved the theatre. Our mum and dad were mad on musicals, and Gillian and I both went to the Anna Scher theatre school."

"We're a very close family. I

know it sounds awfully corny, but we all meet up on Sundays at our parents' house in Upper Street for roast dinner."

Gillian may be a TV star now, but it doesn't make any difference to parents Ron and Marje. "Mum has never treated us any different, and Gillian doesn't think of herself as something special. Nothing in her life has changed - except she's got lots of money!" said Kim.

"It's A Fair Cop" begins at 7.30pm on Monday. Tickets are £3 - and with 750 already snapped up, you'll have to move fast.



● EastEnders star Gillian Taylor-Firth.



● Supt Dave Dugmore - Hackney's answer to Reg Dixon.



● Glamorous actress Eliza Horne - quit acting to join the Met.

HQ 23.3.90



● Maurice Owen.

Police action in poll tax riot slammed at watchdog group meeting

POLICE tactics during the town hall poll tax riots have been attacked for provoking the looting that caused tens of thousands of pounds worth of damage that police will have to pay for.

Maurice Owen, who represents the North London Council of Christians and Jews on the Hackney Police and Community Consultative Group, said the police were wrong to charge at angry poll tax demonstrators, forcing them into Mare Street and the Narrowway where 22

shops were smashed and looted when the tax was set on March 8.

At the March meeting of the HPCG at Roots Pool Development Association on Thursday last week, Mr Owen said demonstrators had been contained in the square outside the town hall where they were not a danger.

"It was only when police made their charge to clear the front of the town hall I felt that the wrong action was taken.

"They were driven away from the town hall so they could do far more damage," he said.

And he asked Chief Superintendent Nial Mulvihill, the man who personally commanded the 300 police on the night, if he had not acted wrongly.

"Have you, after deliberation, not felt that possibly you had not acted quite as logically in containing them for another hour or two? To hold out and just let them dwindle off rather than do the damage they did in the Narrowway?"

Det Supt Mulvihill denied he made the wrong decision and told Mr Owen: "You are entitled to your opinion. It is one with which I disagree. But as there are court cases pending, potentially police policy with respect to that demo may be questioned in a court of law, so I do not propose to outline my strategy here."

When asked why he had not used all 300 police at the start of the trouble Det Supt Mulvihill commented: "If I had done that at the outset I would have been accused of overpolicing of events and of this being a fascist society."

● Later in the meeting the chair, Beth Blomfield, put forward a resolution expressing the HPCG's disgust at the demonstration and praising the actions of the police, which was passed unanimously.



● Clearing up the damage after the riot.

Star performer Charlie joins in on stage at police charity night



ONE man not afraid of making a right Charlie of himself is Charlie Collins.

The co-ordinator of the Roots Pool Community Centre joined in the fun at the Hackney Empire on Monday night when he was pulled out of the audience.

And it was on with the tutu for Charlie, who was persuaded to play a fairy by magician Stacey Lee.

The fun was all part of a police charity night at the theatre, which raised £1,800.

Gillian Taylforth - Kathy Beale from EastEnders - was a star attraction, performing with sisters Debbie and Kim, who works at Islington police station.

Also performing was Supt Dave Dugmore, who has just left the youth and community section at Stoke Newington station and who thrilled the crowd with an organ version of Styyle Wonder's 'I Just Called To Say I Love You'.

Star-struck coppers queued up in the interval to get Gillian's autograph. And a book autographed by the cast of The Bill was a popular prize in the raffle.

The evening was compered by Stoke Newington PC Paul Smith. Afterwards he said: "It was a good-natured fun night out."

TV programme to prove cab driver's innocence

A BBC producer says his show will reveal the innocence of a man jailed for six years for a crime he did not commit.

Steve Haywood, producer of BBC 2's "Rough Justice" is convinced his show about Sammy Davis, the Stoke Newington minicab driver jailed for rape four years ago, will lead to his release.

Mr Davis, who is married with two kids, was jailed in 1986 after being found guilty of the rape of a Swedish tourist who had been staying with a boyfriend in Stoke Newington.

No forensic evidence backed up the accusation and the whole prosecution case hinged on the fact that the victim said the place where the rape took place was the cab office in Stoke Newington High Street where Mr Davis was working.

Mr Haywood says "Rough Justice" researchers have revealed that the crime

could not have been committed in the cab office.

"The programme has found evidence that establishes she could not have been raped in this cab office," says Mr Haywood.

"We are basically saying here that a mistake has been made. There is no question in my mind that Mr Davis is innocent. I would not go to the length of making a TV programme if I didn't. His conviction has been a disgrace."

Sammy Davis' case was brought to the attention of the "Rough Justice" team by Gloria Van Cooten, who has been a prison visitor for seven years.

She was kicked off the Hackney Police and Community Consultative Group last year after she alleged maltreatment of prisoners in police cells.

"Rough Justice" is on BBC 1 at 9.30pm next Wednesday (April 4).

H9 30.3.90

New station inherits a chequered history

ALL eyes will be on Stoke Newington police when they move into the complex which replaces arguably one of London's most notorious police stations.

When Stoke Newington's small 75-year-old station was demolished back in 1987, many people claimed it was in a bid to wipe out its chequered history.

Community groups have continually voiced concern at police tactics since Asea Simms died at Stoke Newington police station in May 1971.

Subsequent incidents involving Michael Ferreira, Franklin Lee, Colin Roach and Trevor Moraville threw more fuel on the fire of controversy.

Then just a week after the station was demolished, Turley Has-

san was found dead in one of the cells at Dalston police station.

But Stoke Newington's Chief Superintendent Peter Twist has appealed to the public to let them wipe the slate clean as they move into their clean new station.

"I would like people to give us time to show that we are changing," he said. "Let us make a fresh start for the 1990s."

"I'm dismayed that every year

there is an annual march to commemorate deaths which occurred in police custody as many as 20 years ago.

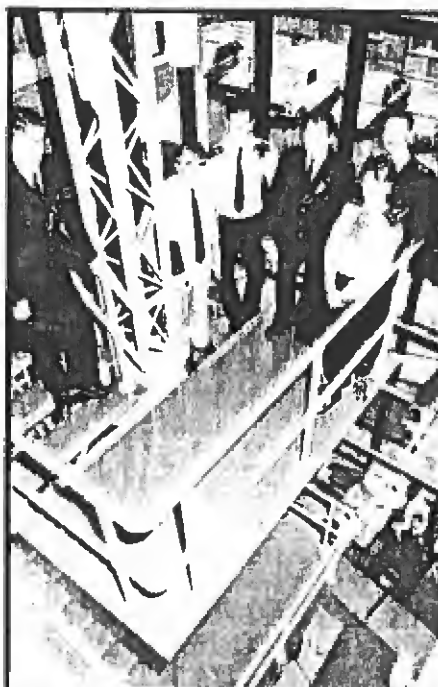
Changing

"Things are changing rapidly throughout the force," he added, referring to police commissioner Sir Peter Imbert's Plus Programme, which emphasises a "compassionate" police force.

"Our officers are having to respond to the changes of these new policies. While police officers will not change overnight I believe there is a very different attitude amongst those who work in the borough of Hackney."

Hackney Community Defence Association secretary Graham Smith hit back: "But these incidents are continuing to happen." He referred to Raphael Joseph and Glenford Lewis, who are suing the police after alleged beatings over the last year.

"Because of the history of Stoke Newington police station, it was as good a time as any to demolish it and build a new police station," he added.



● All aboard for the new supernick.



● Ch Supt Peter Twist.



● Insp Sue Best.



● Pc John Edwards.

Dalston 'will be out on a limb'

CLOSING Dalston police station will leave victims of one of the area's worst crime blackspots with nowhere to turn.

That's the claim of Dalston beat cop, Pc John Edwards, who says they'll be out on a limb after the last policeman leaves the historic station.

Pc Edwards, who moves to the Stoke Newington Supernick this weekend, said: "The station is better for the whole division, but for the sub-division of Dalston it's not good news."

"The people around Dalston I've spoken to are very unhappy that the po-

lice station is closing, especially with Dalston Cross now having opened there."

Currently Dalston cop-shop is handy for victims of pickpockets in Ridley Road market.

"Once the station is closed there will be nowhere for these people to turn to," added Pc Edwards.

Chief Superintendent Peter Twist, of Stoke Newington police, hit back: "Keeping the station open 24 hours a day would take five officers a day, he claimed.

"They are five officers I would prefer to have serving on the streets," he said. "I don't believe I can justify taking officers off the streets to man a Victorian police station at the end of its useful life."

Besides, Stoke Newington's mobile police station will be parked at Ridley Road market on Saturdays, he added, and a free, direct phonenumber is to be installed outside Dalston station.

When the last officers leave Dalston station it will be taken over by the traffic wardens unit.



● The rape crisis suite.

Facts behind the new 'supernick'

Q HOME Secretary David Waddington will perform the official opening ceremony of the station on Thursday, June 21. The following two days will be devoted to tours of the huge new station.

Q THE new station provides 12 cells compared to five at Dalston. Each come with anti-graffiti filter but have no showers. Hackney Lay Visitors' panel are writing to the Home Office demanding showers are installed.

Q STOKES Newington will be the only station with two custody rooms to deal with the division's enormous workload quicker. Each also has a holding room for detaining prisoners for up to about three hours.

Q INTERVIEW recording facilities in three rooms will use up less police time. Taped interviews take an average of 13 minutes compared to the two hours of constant writing.

Q THE new victim examination suite - for victims of rape and sexual assault - is

sited on the top floor, in the quietest part of the new station. Fitted out like a homey new flat with lounge, kitchen and bathroom it has fitted carpets and curtains and there'll even be toys available to help comfort distressed child victims.

Q THE new station will host the biggest CID office in Europe and there's also a suite of two offices for major incident inquiries to be run from for murder or rape investigations.

Q IN the event of a huge disaster hitting the borough, like a plane crash or a towering inferno-style blaze, the station will provide the base to co-ordinate the response. It will be staffed by officers specially trained to respond to disasters and local violence.

Q THERE will be no stables at the new station, to the dismay of Chief Supt Peter Twist, who says: "I quite like the idea of police horses attached to the station as they add to the rural feel of the station." There will be some dog handlers there.

Top cop dubs it London's finest

"THIS is London's newest and finest police station," declared Chief Superintendent Peter Twist enthusiastically, standing in the wide-open foyer of Stoke Newington's new supernick.

This weekend the whole of Stoke Newington's police force will move from Dalston into the huge purpose-built complex with 70 new offices and rooms.

Almost every police service will be centralised at the £7 million station which has taken three years to build - one year over schedule.

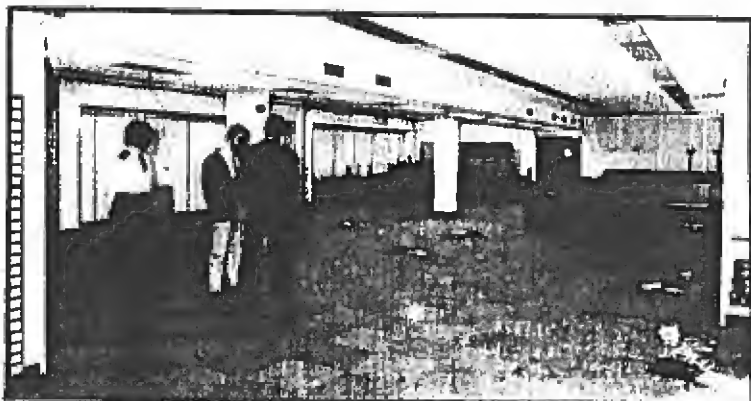
Only the child protection unit and youth and community sections will stay where they are - across the yard in Firgrove House.

From the light, open-plan foyer to the clean, air-condi-

tioned cells it's an impressive maze of doors and corridors on four floors and a wealth of new facilities.

But that wealth of facilities will not be opened up for other divisions all over London to use, insisted Chief Supt Twist.

"This is a busy police station and I'm reluctant for our facilities to be used by other divisions," he said.



● The biggest CID office in Europe.

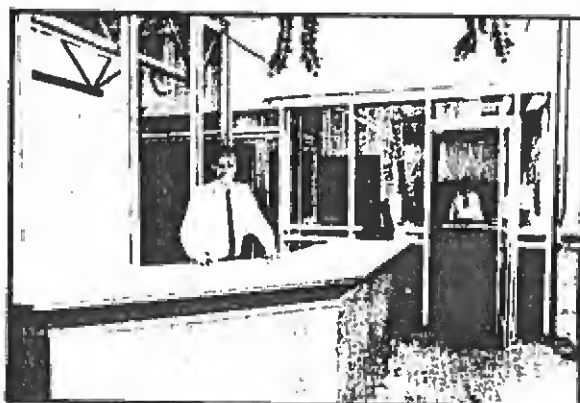
Police relief at move

FED up with their decrepid Victorian workplace, Dalston's cops are looking forward to this weekend's move.

"At Dalston you've got about 300 people trying to work out of a place that was probably designed for about 100 people," says Chief Supt Twist.

About six times bigger than Dalston police station, the new complex will be home to 350 police and civil staff.

And among the morale boosting extras at the new station are two rest rooms and one games room complete with a full-sized snooker table. Even the bugs attic is utilised, providing a home for the gym.



● The main entrance.

Words : Martin Talbot = Pictures : Steve King

HG 30.3.90

Trafalgar Square riot



Community charge: Mounted police trying to control the violence that erupted in central London yesterday during one of the biggest political rallies ever

MICHAEL SMITH

Mass arrests after looting and burning

A MASSIVE anti-poll tax rally yesterday turned into the most serious rioting in central London for decades.

At least 58 police officers were injured, one seriously, as 2,000 police battled with angry protesters. There were also more than 75 casualties among the more than 100,000 demonstrators. Scotland Yard said 341 people were arrested.

Cars were overturned and set on fire. The windows of West End theatres and banks were smashed and shops looted.

Fire crews fought a series of fires, including a serious blaze at Grand Buildings in Trafalgar Square.

Police reinforcements in full riot gear and mounted officers were called in to quell skirmishes in streets near Trafalgar Square. Running bottles took place in the side streets. A burning barricade of cars and

double-bins blocked Charing Cross Road.

Dozens of policemen and demonstrators were injured by glass, wooden staves, and metal fittings from scaffolding around a 10-storey building on one corner of the square.

The trouble began just after 3pm when police began moving thousands of anti-poll tax demonstrators up from Downing Street along Whitehall.

By 6.30pm waves of mounted police were trying to break up the demonstrators. At one point the wounded were laid out along Whitehall for more than 100 yards.

Soon afterwards the crowd surrounded isolated riot units outside the South African Embassy. A deployment of 10 police horses appeared to break the encirclement.

A fire then broke out in workmen's cabins near the embassy.

A group of about 100 people outside the embassy chanted "Burn it down", and pelted police lines.

But as police dispersed the crowd from the square, using what some observers felt were questionable tactics, the rioters moved up Charing Cross Road and then up St Martin's Lane into the heart of the West End theatre district.

There were extraordinary scenes in Piccadilly Circus as the rioters moved on. Marching up the Haymarket just after six o'clock they smashed and looted stores.

By 6.45pm traffic was at a total standstill in Leicester Square as demonstrators danced on the roofs of buses.

At one moment an electronic sign that flashes a variety of messages beamed out "Revolution begins with changes in the individual."

The tactics of the police appeared to be just to keep them moving constantly.

After Piccadilly a hard core of 1,500 to 2,000 demonstrators rioted along Upper Regent Street and Portland Place smashing every prestige shop window along the way. Dozens of Britain's most famous luxury stores were attacked including Liberty's, Garrards, Tower Records, Next, Aqua Scutum and Dickens & Jones. The BBC at Langham Place had windows smashed and its bookshop was looted.

South African Airways was particularly badly hit.

The police made sporadic arrests but seemed unable to prevent the mayhem which left the West End looking as though it had been sacked by a marauding army.

At about 9pm the last remaining demonstrators split into fac-

tions. Shopkeepers were out boarding up their premises and sweeping up the broken glass.

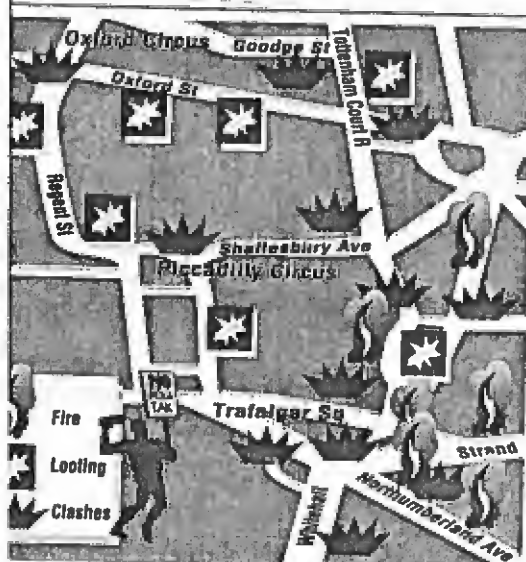
In Trafalgar Square a bulldozer was brought in to clear the rubbish.

Late last night some 500 rioters running before the police began looting shops in Covent Garden.

Poll tax riot - P2&3
Poll tax anomalies - P9

CORRESPONDENT

1.4.90



When, how and where it all happened

13.00 March sets off from Kennington. About 20,000 people gathered in Kennington Park.
13.45 Head of the march reaches Lambeth Road. No serious problems according to police.
14.00 First arrest for public disorder.
14.25 Head of the march reaches Downing Street. End of parade takes three hours to reach Trafalgar Square.
14.40 Two smoke bombs thrown in Parliament Square.
14.50 More missiles thrown in Parliament Square followed by an arrest for actual bodily harm.
15.05 Head of march reaches Trafalgar Square. Police describe the rally as "good-natured". A fringe group of 300 people halts in Whitehall and begins throwing bottles at police lines. Procession diverted around Embankment and enters Trafalgar Square through Northumberland Avenue.
16.00 At top of Downing Street 12 mounted police move in to push fringe groups to Trafalgar Square.
16.25 There are 30 arrests in

Whitehall. Police in riot gear with short shields deployed.
16.30 Police come under serious attack from youths armed with bricks in Northumberland Avenue.
16.45 People from the main rally begin to disperse. Several hundred youths remain fighting with police.
Two police vans attacked at the corner of Northumberland Avenue and Whitehall.
16.55: Demonstrators burst into Grand Buildings and begin to throw scaffolding poles, clamps and wood from the site.
17.00 More than 10 people reported injured. A police personnel carrier with officers inside is overturned on The Strand. The officers are sent to St Thomas's Hospital. Five other officers reported injured, one hit in the mouth with a brick. Mounted police enter Trafalgar Square.
17.10 Demonstrators climb scaffolding on the corner of Northumberland Avenue and The Strand and begin throwing bricks at police. Police announce to the crowd that riot police and mounted police are being sent in to disperse

the demonstration. The scaffolding is set on fire as several hundred youths continue to attack police in the south-east corner of Trafalgar Square.
17.18 Rally over. Number of police injured is 36, mostly head and face injuries. Fire engine attacked as it arrives to put out fire on scaffolding. Police report most people now making their way home.
17.25 Police officers come under attack outside South Africa House. Windows are broken and a small fire is started in the building. Three vehicles also reported set on fire in The Strand. Youths break into a building site next to the National Gallery for more "ammunition".
17.30 There are 25 police in St Thomas's Hospital, one suffering from amnesia. Knot of rioters moves to St Martin-in-the-Fields.
17.45 Number of police now reported at St Thomas's Hospital with head and rib injuries is 36. Civilian casualties being taken to Westminster Hospital. Police report Trafalgar Square as "calmer" with large crowds watching the fire

18.00 Looting breaks out in Charing Cross Road and in The Haymarket as demonstrators move away from Trafalgar Square into the West End.
18.10 Three vehicles on fire in Charing Cross Road. St Thomas's reports total of 40 injured police.
18.25 Demonstrator suffers serious head injury outside South Africa House and is taken to hospital.
18.30 Further looting in Regent Street and Oxford Street.
19.00 Trafalgar Square virtually empty. Firemen still tackling blaze on scaffolding.
19.30 Blaze extinguished.
20.00 Illegal march in Oxford Circus broken up by riot police when it reaches St Martin-in-the-Fields. Sporadic lighting breaks out in the Tottenham Court Road area.
20.20 Fire in Goudge Street tube station.
21.00 March down Charing Cross Road broken up opposite St Martin-in-the-Fields.
22.15 Looters attack shops in Covent Garden.
Toll of injured by then: 75 civilians, 58 policemen

TV show claims rape case driver is innocent

THIS week TV audiences saw the result of 12 months' research which a BBC producer claims proves the innocence of Sammy Davis — a Stoke Newington minicab driver jailed for six years for the rape of a Swedish tourist four years ago.

On Wednesday night BBC 1's Rough Justice programme revealed new evidence they claim clears Mr Davis of the rape in the Manor House cab office where he worked.

They have turned their evidence over to the Home Office and want to see the Court of Appeal quash the conviction.

During the show reporter David Jessel explained that the prosecution case hinged on the fact that the terrified and confused victim said the rape happened in Manor House minicab office ISP, where Mr Davis was the only driver on duty at the time.

Cabbie's six-year jail term is a miscarriage of justice says researcher

by MARK GOULD

After 12 months of research Rough Justice believe that she identified the wrong office. They say it's more likely the office she went into early on that Sunday afternoon was somewhere around Stoke Newington Church Street.

Eight hours after the ordeal the victim went to Stoke Newington police, and a day later Mr Davis was charged on the grounds of a positive identification of the cab office.

Ghanaian-born Mr Davis gave up

his right to an identity parade and invited the victim to look at him alone — she identified him as her attacker.

Mr Davis had a moustache. Her earlier evidence described a clean shaven suspect.

The victim was from a small Swedish village and had little or no contact with Afro-Caribbean people.

Rough Justice producer Steve Haywood concluded: "If Sammy had been in an identity parade line-up she would never have identified him."

To add to the unique nature of the case Mr Davis faces deportation back to Ghana if he applies for release on probation. This could happen before

the Home Office investigates the evidence unearthed by Rough Justice.

Peter Ashman, of watchdog group Justice, said it was very difficult to get cases referred back to the Court of Appeal but added: "There must be a very good chance of the case being quashed if it does".

A Home Office spokesperson said the Home Secretary would look at any new evidence the programme threw up, but could not comment on the question of deportation.

LP contest winners

Gentle touch

STOKE Newington's new £7 million Supernick opened for business on Tuesday morning. Chief Supt Peter Twist presented a bouquet of flowers to the first person through the doors.

Scheme to attract parents back to the Force

Creche plan at police station

STEP aside Kojak, Dirty Harry and Robocop — Hackney's police are looking to a new recruit to help them wipe crime off the streets.

Meet . . . Baby Minder! The nappy-changing, bottle-feeding, baby-burping crimebuster who is set to join our top 'tacs in the battle against the baddies.

Police chiefs want to ensure the patter of tiny feet doesn't rob them of their best bobbies by providing mummy and daddy cops with a creche.

And if the plan gets the go-ahead the borough's police will be the first in the country to get the super new nursery service.

Police are facing a recruitment crisis as the numbers of young people in the population decline, claims Stoke Newington's Chief Superintendent, Peter Twist.

"The advantages of full creche facilities is that they would allow us to attract

Patter of tiny feet needn't be a bar to crimebusting

by MARTIN TALBOT

back to the police service those officers who have left the Force to have children," he explained.

Policing Hackney would also benefit by the extra female officers who would come back to the Force under such a scheme, he said. The service would be available to male officers too, he added.

"I don't want to lose experienced police officers because they have to look after their children," he added.

Insp Sue Best, of Stoke Newington police, is looking into the viability of the scheme. She said: "I have one constable on my relief whose wife works on a Fri-

day, and is having to take time off to look after their child. When I spoke to him about this idea he said it would be marvellous."

Nursery

The nursery probably wouldn't be based at either Hackney or Stoke Newington stations, she added, and the search is on to find suitable accommodation for a creche elsewhere in Hackney.

The plan has been made more possible by last month's budget changes which made creches tax-free. The plan will be put to the police commissioner later this year, but Chief Supt Twist said he hoped it could be in place within a year.

Disruptive behaviour

THE report on the back page of last Friday's Gazette headlined "TV programme to prove cab driver's innocence" states that Gloria Van Cooten was kicked off the Hackney Police Community Consultative Group after she alleged maltreatment of prisoners in police cells.

I must inform your readers that this was not so. Mrs Van Cooten was NEVER a member of the consultative group. She was a lay visitor in Hackney, and her accreditation was withdrawn last September by the Home Office due to her disruptive behaviour at panel meetings while carrying out visits. — BETTY BLOMFIELD, BEECHOLME ESTATE, UPPER CLAPTON.

WAR ON THE DRUG DENS

£250,000 boost for special 'hit squads'

SPECIAL squads of drugbusters are to be drafted in to Hackney in a desperate attempt to stop it becoming like the drug-ridden ghettos of America.

More than £250,000 of government cash has been earmarked for the borough, it was announced by Home Secretary David Waddington this week after it was targeted as an area with a serious drugs problem.

The main aim of the "hit squads" will be to help youngsters who are most at risk from the flood of heroin, cocaine and other hard drugs available on virtually every council estate.

The move comes as the borough's top cops warned that unless something was done soon to tackle the drugs menace we could end up with a problem on the scale of America's inner cities where drug-related killings are an everyday occurrence and police no-go areas are common.

Already the new super-drug crack, which is highly addictive, has found its way from the ghettos of America to the tower blocks of Hackney and detectives admit it is becoming increasingly easy to get hold of.

Battle plan

For the first time ever, top-level talks will take place between detectives, council officers and community and advice groups to thrash out a battle plan. The "hit squads" could then be on Hackney's streets by September.

Last year police arrested more than 400 drug dealers in East London, and 2,278 people for possessing drugs. Many of the arrests were from tip-offs and anonymous phone calls.

"The south of the borough has a very serious heroin problem and in the north it is cocaine and its dangerous derivative, crack," said Chief Supt Peter Twist, who heads Hackney's police.

Alarming

"We are seizing crack more and more and as one of the poorest inner city boroughs in the UK, I am not surprised to find a fairly alarming level of drug abuse throughout the borough.

"Sadly, deprivation, poverty, lack of social opportunities, poor housing, and criminal activity do seem to go hand in hand. Hackney regrettably has all of these.

"The American experience of drug abuse in inner city areas not dissimilar to Hackney is very discouraging. But I look forward to playing an active role together with all the other agencies that will be involved in this initiative."

by STEWART
FOWLER

Pub punters arrested following punch-up

FORTY pub drinkers were arrested and taken to a police station following a fight in which two men were stabbed.

It happened late on Saturday night following an incident at The Claddagh Pub in Well Street, Hackney.

One man received a knife wound in the back which needed hospital attention and another was wounded in the arm.

Most of the pub drinkers were allowed to go following questioning. A man has been charged in connection with the incident.

A party of five middle-aged women were among the group caught up in the incident at the pub.

Police are continuing their investigations.

Police hunt driver who sprayed CS gas at kids

POLICE are hunting a maniac who sprayed CS gas in the faces of six children as they played outside their home on Sunday.

The youngsters - all brothers and sisters aged two to 11 - were attacked as they sat in their dad's taxi cab in Chardmore Road, Upper Clapton, at noon. Joshua Engel, 11, and his brothers and sisters Joel, nine, Moses, seven, Samuel, six, Kresl, four, and Bunim, two, had watched a row between the attacker and another motorist.

Both drivers had refused to move aside as they tried to pass each other while driving in opposite directions past parked cars in the narrow side-street.

Finally the attacker began to reverse backwards, but as he drew level with the taxi he wound down his window and

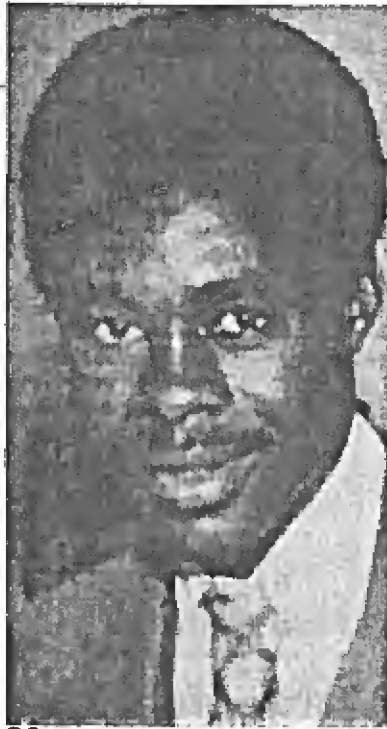
sprayed the youngsters. They were taken to Queen Elizabeth Children's Hospital where they were treated for irritation to their eyes and slight burns to their faces, but not detained.

DI Tim Mercer, of Stoke Newington CID, said: "We think the substance sprayed was CS gas. Although they are not badly hurt, these children were very shocked."

"This seems to be completely motiveless. The kids weren't laughing at the men - they just seem to have been in the wrong place at the wrong time."

The children were too shocked to give a detailed description of the mindless attacker, but said the man is black and 40 years old and was driving a large white car. Anyone who may have seen something should contact DI Mercer on 468 7271.

'My four years of hell'



© Sammy Davis - television programme convinced he's not guilty.

THERESA DAVIS, wife of jailed minicab driver Sammy Davis, has told the Gazette about the four-year struggle she has endured to see her husband cleared of the rape of a Swedish tourist.

Sammy's conviction was the subject a year-long investigation by a team from BBC 1's Rough Justice programme who are convinced he is not guilty.

They say the prosecution case hinged on the victim's identification of the Manor Park cab office where Sammy worked part-time as the place she was raped on a Sunday afternoon in November, 1986.

Doubt

Their investigation has thrown this evidence into doubt and they are calling for the conviction to be quashed - a hope Mrs Davis has held for four years.

Rough Justice say their research took them to 43 minicab offices in the Stoke Newington area. At least three of them more closely resemble the place where the

Minicab driver's wife still hopes he will be cleared of rape conviction

by MARK GOULD

rape took place. When he was sentenced to six years in prison in 1986, Theresa tried to keep the news of his conviction from their two young sons.

"It was very hard at the beginning, especially with the children because they didn't know what was going on as they were only five and seven at the time," she says.

"Now they know about it and they know that he was innocent at the beginning."

"I found the whole thing very hard. It was like I was ashamed of the whole thing. They (the kids) came first so I tried to keep it from them by saying that their daddy was in hospital."

"But the kids are intelligent and knew something was going on but didn't say."

At the moment Sammy, 38, is due for parole but the

fact he came to England from Ghana as an illegal immigrant has created additional problems.

The Home Office immigration department have decided on an indefinite adjournment of the deportation case until any appeal over his conviction is heard.

Theresa, who lives in Highbury, is angry about the situation and will not be satisfied even if the Home Office do relent and give Sammy British citizenship, like herself and the children.

Taken

"The last four years of his working life have been taken away. Everything has gone backwards. It doesn't matter if they give him British citizenship - they can't make up for the last four years," she says.

"It's my hope that Sammy will be released so that we can be a family again, that's what matters really. It would be nice to have him home by Christmas."

Fury over Right-wing election meeting at Asian school

BNP is committed to spreading racial violence in this country."

Tower Hamlets Council say they are "very concerned" about the use of the school, previously called Robert Montefiori, which was renamed Osman in 1986 in honour of a Bangladeshi hero of the civil war in 1971.

The meeting cannot be banned because of election law which gives every party putting up candidates the right to a platform.

Bechnal Green's top cop, Chief Superintendent John Grieve, said: "We have to allow any political group the right to air their views during local elections. The police will also allow anyone to demonstrate against such views, there are always two sides. We have plans to deal with possible problems."

ULTRA-RIGHT wing group the British National Party are planning to hold an election meeting in a school where almost every pupil is Bangladeshi.

The BNP, whose slogan is "Rights for Whites", want to hold an election rally in the gym at the Osman Primary School, Vallance Road, Bechnal Green, where over 90 per cent of the pupils have parents from Bangladesh.

The meeting, set for Saturday next week (April 21), has created a storm among the Bangladeshi community in an area where there have been outbreaks of racial violence in the last few months. A spokesman for the Bangladesh Welfare Association said: "We are very disturbed by the news. We want to curtail it because we don't want racial violence and the

HC 13-4-90

The operation of schemes for checking on prisoners in police cells is criticised in a report to the Home Office. Terry Kirby reports

Lay visitors cast little light behind the Blue Lamp

MOST LAY visiting schemes for police stations are rudimentary, weak and underfunded and too few visitors question the activities of police, according to an unpublished report being studied by the Home Office.

Crucially, it says only a few schemes routinely ask police whether codes of practice under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (Pace) governing the care of suspects are being observed and few visitors inspect custody records or check the accounts of prisoners against them. This is despite the fact that it is one of the reasons for their existence.

The report by the Bristol Centre for Criminal Justice is deeply critical of the lack of support for lay visiting schemes by some local authorities, saying many "do no more than establish the principle of independent oversight".

The Bristol report suggests that a measure recommended by the Scarman report as a valuable method of scrutiny

of the police is being wasted at a time of increasing concern about treatment of suspects and breaches of the Pace code of conduct.

Many cases involving the disbanded West Midlands Police Serious Crime Squad have concerned breaches of Pace rules over access to lawyers and conduct of interviews. Lord Lane, the Lord Chief Justice, has warned police not to breach Pace rules.

A summary of the Home Office-commissioned report, which was compiled by Charles Kemp and Rod Morgan, has been seen by *The Independent*. The report, which took two years to complete, was delivered to the Home Office last October.

Lay visiting panels were established during the mid-1980s. They exist in 36 of the 41 police areas in England and Wales, under the wing of police authorities who provide most of their members, along with consultative groups and vol-

untary organisations. Only six recruit from the wider public. All but two of London's 38 boroughs operate schemes with a broader-based membership drawn from councils, community organisations and the public. They are administered by the Home Office.

No schemes exist in Scotland because, says the report, police and local authorities decided there was no demand, and councillors are able to visit any police station, although by prior appointment.

In England and Wales, pairs of visitors make unannounced visits to police stations to check on conditions in which prisoners and suspects are kept. Prisoners can refuse to be seen and visitors cannot discuss the circumstances that brought them to the station. Visitors can take up individual complaints about care and custody.

The summary says there are enormous variations in the "operational seri-

ousness" of schemes. "Many provincial schemes with restricted membership are operationally and organisationally weak. Many police authorities have failed to provide a strong lead with the result that schemes are under-resourced and rudimentary."

While accepting that there is a variation in need around the country, a few schemes exist "in little more than name only" and conduct patchy or infrequent visitings which "seldom or never" find anything wrong. "In some instances, the task of implementing and sustaining supposedly independent schemes has fallen by default to the police."

Comments by lay visitors usually concern poor conditions in stations. Those few schemes with specially appointed panels were more likely to compile reviews and comparative reports to assess whether conditions changed. "Such appraisals are noticeably lacking from most schemes' written accounts."

Only a small number of schemes provide evidence that they check the accounts of prisoners against custody records, which should be the first line of inquiry following complaints. "Relatively few schemes appear routinely to make it their business to inquire closely into compliance with Pace and the accompanying codes of conduct relating to detention."

Schemes that work best are where members are recruited from the public. Councillors and other "community spokespersons" often consider it simply another duty and are unable to give visiting enough time, says the report.

It says there are "strong practical and moral arguments" for schemes recruited by advertisement from the public and with some autonomy from the police authority. London schemes are praised for "impressive" work, particularly in scrutinising observance of Pace and monitoring improvements. It sug-

gests some of the rules governing London schemes should be implemented nationally.

The report recommends strengthened guidelines for police authorities and clarification of grey areas over what visitors can actually do and see, particularly an extension of their remit to be able to see all prisoners. Some stations exclude them from seeing prisoners detained under the Mental Health Act, immigration cases and juveniles. Schemes should do more to convince "wary and mistrustful" sections of the community and engage in more publicity and promotion. "Lay visiting remains largely unknown to local communities."

In addition to scrutinising custody conditions, says the report, the schemes are a valuable method of increasing public confidence in the police and establishing dialogue with the community. Most police officers accept the need for independent oversight.

Woman 'sacked' after pressing cases of alleged assault and ill-treatment

A LAY VISITOR who pursued the cases of men alleging beatings and ill-treatment by the Metropolitan Police was removed from her position by the Home Office at the request of the panel.

Gloria van Cooten, 54, a civil servant and prison visitor, left the Hackney lay visitors' panel in east London last autumn when members claimed she was taking too close an interest in individual cases and that her attempts to question police and raise matters during meetings were disruptive.

The affair spotlights the visitors' often uneasy relations with police and the restrictions on their role.

Mrs Van Cooten, who began monthly visiting in January 1988, was horrified by what she saw in the cells in police stations in east London. Allegations of violence were made to her on at least seven of the 20 visits she made before her removal last October.

Copies of the official reports Mrs Van Cooten made have been seen by *The Independent*. On a visit to Hackney in March 1988 she noted after seeing a prisoner: "2 black eyes & bruising to the side of right eye. Alleges he was punched by police." Another prisoner "alleges police jumped on his head when he hid in a bum-

bin. There is a bump/swelling on the back of his head."

At City Road she noted: "Alleges he was beaten up by police — punched in stomach, kicked on shins, there was evidence of laceration to the palms of both hands — bleeding." Another prisoner had: "Lacerations to the right side of the head and bleeding. His right arm was severely battered and bruised... his right leg had a deep cut & bleeding profusely. He alleges that his injuries were done by the police."

At City Road in January 1989, two juveniles were recorded as having spent seven hours without food or water. At Dalston, the following month, a doctor was requested by Mrs Van Cooten for a prisoner suspected of having a broken nose. She recorded: "He reckons the police did it... the police who arrested him smelted of drink."

Mrs Van Cooten said: "I was shocked. I always supported the police, but this made me view them differently."

In most of the cases, senior officers are said to have subsequently conceded to meetings of the panel that some allegations were true. But when Mrs Van Cooten attempted to persuade fellow members to pursue cases

further, they refused. She said: "They would not even have a proper discussion and just accepted unquestioningly what the police said. They were protecting and covering up for the police and I just could not stomach this."

She also objected to the panel meeting on police premises and the presence of senior local officers, which she felt reduced the independence of the panel.

Mrs Van Cooten admits disrupting meetings but feels her behaviour was justified. After warnings, the panel asked the Home Office to remove her accreditation. Despite rejecting her appeal, the Home Office said Douglas Hurd, the then Home Secretary, "shares your concern" about meetings on police premises.

The Hackney panel is different from most in London in that, like the local police/community consultative committee, it is boycotted by Hackney council and many other local groups. Betty Blomfield, a former Labour member of Hackney council, is chairwoman of both panel and committee. The area has a reputation for conflict between police and local black people, with allegations of drugs planting, harassment and ill-

treatment by police.

Charles Kemp, one of the authors of the Bristol report on lay visiting schemes, who has examined the Hackney problems, believes it illustrates that it is necessary for local people to become involved for balance.

"When local authorities and other bodies refuse to join, they create a vacuum and the agenda is set, by default, by the police."

Mrs Blomfield accepted that some of the cases raised by Mrs Van Cooten involved malpractice by police, but argued that Mrs Van Cooten's disruptive tactics made her dismissal necessary. "Once a matter is the subject of a complaint it is *sub judice* and we cannot talk about it. And we are not there at the time and cannot determine the truth."

Mrs Blomfield said that for the last six months the panel had met at a variety of non-police sites. "The police officers have to attend meetings to advise us, particularly about policy matters and if we want them to leave, we can ask them to, although there has not been a recent occasion when we have wanted to." The panel had found "nothing really serious" to take up with police in recent months. The police welcomed the panel, she said.



Gloria van Cooten outside one of the police stations at which she was a visitor Photograph: Geraint Lewis

IND 18.4.90

ELECTION FURY OVER NF LINK

HACKNEY'S Liberal Democrats have been accused of collaborating with the National Front.

Brian Sedgemore, the Labour MP for Hackney South, made the claim after it emerged that Cllr Colin Beadle, chair of Hackney Liberal Democrats, has had his nomination forms for the May 3 council elections signed by Gary Russell, a former NF organiser and self-confessed "political soldier" for the ultra Right-wing party.

Cllr Beadle, who currently represents Haggerston, has vehemently denied any knowledge of Mr Russell's NF links. He accused the Labour Party of trying to smear his party.

Mr Sedgemore has called on national SLD leader, Paddy Ashdown, to investigate the links between Hackney's SLD and the National Front.

In an early day motion in the House of Commons, he alleged that the former Liberal parliamentary candidate for Shoreditch, Jeff Roberts, had "collaborated" with a prominent member of the NF, and with various criminal elements.

Mr Sedgemore also called on the SLD to publicly "repudiate" Cllr Beadle.

Hackney Council leader John McCafferty and Tory opposition leader Joe Loben-

Collaboration claim by MP whips up a political storm

by MAX VELODY



● Cllr Beadle: "smear campaign."

stein have both called on Cllr Beadle to withdraw from the election.

Cllr McCafferty said: "Cllr Beadle ought to reject his proposer and stand down."

"If he allowed himself to

be nominated by a man whose past history he did not know, it showed a lax attitude on his part towards the responsibilities of being a councillor."

But Cllr Beadle was adamant he had no knowledge of Mr Russell's background.

"Had I known him to have any links with the National Front, there is no way I would have had him sign my papers," he said.

"I abhor Nazism and fascism in any form."

Cllr Beadle explained that he had acted on behalf of Mr Russell and a number of tenants who have been angered by council delays on work at the Stonebridge Estate. "That

● Continued on page 3.

Election rumpus

● From page 1.

has been my only dealings with him," he said.

"He signed my nomination form after it had been rejected by the council's returning officer on a technicality. With just a few hours to go before the nominations closed, I desperately needed someone to sign my form."

"Mr Russell happened to be in the Town Hall at the time."

Liberal Democrat leader Cllr George Wintle this week supported his colleague. "He would not have got an NF sympathiser to sign his form had he known of his background," he said.

And Mr Russell told the Gazette: "I am very sorry Cllr Beadle has been criticised over this. I keep my political activities and my activities as a tenant totally separate, and he could not have known about my NF past."

He said he had been a dedicated NF "political soldier" for five years up until 1988, and admitted: "I still believe in the separate development of different races and cultures."

But he said he had not been politically active since the NF effectively broke up two years ago.

As the Gazette went to press, the national SLD was drafting an amendment to Mr Sedgemore's motion showing its support for Cllr Beadle, and looking forward to many more years of hard work on behalf of the people of Hackney by Cllr Beadle. In it, the SLD accept Cllr Beadle's account of the circumstances surrounding the signing of his nomination papers, and accuses the Labour Party of smearing their candidate.

BNP meeting switched

FEARS of violent clashes have forced the British National party to drop plans to hold an election meeting in a school where most of the pupils are Bangladeshi.

The right wing group had wanted to stage an election rally tomorrow (Saturday) in the Osmani Primary School

in Vallance Road, Bethnal Green, where 90 per cent of the pupils have parents from Bangladesh.

But after talks with Bethnal Green's top cop, Chief Superintendent John Grieve, they have agreed to switch the venue to nearby Weavers Field School.

BNP spokesperson, Eddie

Clark, said: "We have agreed to waive our rights under the Representation of the People's Act because police were worried about widespread disorder."

"The BNP will, however, keep in its possession the formal booking for the Osmani School in case any pressure is put on the new venue at Weavers Field."

Riot help

HACKNEY Community Defence Association is encouraging people who were arrested at the national anti-poll tax demonstration in Trafalgar Square to get in touch with them. The organisation has been heavily involved in offering support and advice to a number of the 57 people arrested at the riot outside Hackney Town Hall last month at the meeting to set the poll tax. HCDA can be contacted on 249 0193.

BNP face court threat over election meeting

POLICE could prosecute ultra-right wing British National Party members for stirring up racial hatred during speeches at an election rally.

Before the rally, BNP supporters clashed with anti-racist groups and members of the Socialist Workers' Party, resulting in 19 arrests for minor public order offences, disorderly behaviour and affray.

One policeman was slightly injured during the confrontation outside Weavers Fields School, Bethnal Green, which was chosen as the venue after fears of serious disorder if the meeting went ahead at the nearby Osmani School in Vallance Road - where nearly all the pupils have parents from Bangladesh.

by MARK GOULD

Attempts to ban the meeting were unsuccessful as the BNP is putting up candidates in four Tower Hamlets wards for the local elections next month which gives them the right to hold a public meeting under the Representation of the People Act.

Over 150 BNP supporters gathered for the meeting on Saturday afternoon and traded insults with more than 250 protesters.

Bethnal Green Police drafted in over 500 officers to control the situation, and Bethnal Green Tube station was closed that afternoon so that BNP supporters could be escorted home via Whitechapel station.

The rally heard speeches from BNP leader John Tyndall and prospective BNP candidate in Spitalfields, Kenneth Walsh.

But both men could face prosecution for inciting racial hatred.

Bethnal Green's top cop, Chief Superintendent John Grieve, said that officers were present in the hall when the speeches were being made and that "the police were looking at that evidence."

Chief Supt Grieve called the day a "triumph for democracy." He added: "People were allowed to express their opinions on both sides. My feeling was that the Bangladeshi community showed a great deal of good sense in voting with their feet and showing their contempt for the situation by staying away."

Those that did demonstrate behaved with a great deal of sense."

Unable to fight in both camps

MRS Betty Blomfield (letter, April 6) was right in stating that Mrs Gloria Van Cooten was never a member of the Hackney Police Community Consultative Group. But unlike Mrs Blomfield, who chairs this group and also chairs the lay visitors' panel, Mrs Van Cooten's conscience would not allow her to fight in both camps at the same time.

The lay visitors' group was set up by the Home Office specifically to monitor the welfare, conditions and malfeasance that detainees complain of while in police custody. The consultative group, on the other hand, warrants a completely different approach to the police and their duties throughout the borough.

Mrs Blomfield clearly finds her position tenable in both situations. She changes hats without any qualms which is one of the reasons neither Mrs Van Cooten nor I could give credence to the lay visitors' panel. - T.W. McCANN, MORETON CLOSE

Gary Stretch police issue appeal for reinstatement

SEVEN police officers who allegedly beat up Gary Stretch in 1987 have gone to the High Court in a bid to avoid being disciplined.

The City Road-based constables, who have been suspended from duty for two-and-a-half years, say too much time has passed for their case to be judged fairly.

The policemen's High Court appeal is expected to take place next month and, if successful, they could be back on the beat again within a matter of months.

In the meantime, a disciplinary tribunal which opened two-and-a-half weeks ago has been postponed until after the hearing.

The policemen's action comes after the disciplinary

panel rejected a similar request and ordered the tribunal should go ahead two weeks ago.

The disciplinary tribunal comes after a two-year probe by the Police Complaints Authority into claims that Mr Stretch was beaten up by seven off-duty policemen.

Mr Stretch was left with half an ear hanging off after he was attacked outside The Limes pub in Hackney Road in November, 1987. Twelve days later the seven policemen were suspended.

In January last year, the Crown Prosecution Service decided they would not face criminal charges following the first stage of the Police Complaints Authority investigation.

Probe into police cell death

AN INQUIRY has been launched after a man was found dead in police cells.

His body was discovered in Leman Street police station on Monday night. He had been taken into police custody after an ambulance crew refused to take him to hospital from a Chinese takeaway in Commercial Road, Whitechapel.

A police doctor examined him at 9pm and pronounced him fit to be detained, but he was found dead by an officer making a routine visit to the cells just before 11pm.

Detained

A spokesperson for Leman Street police said the 42-year-old man had been visited and woken up every half hour after being detained.

The cause of death is not known as the results of a post mortem carried out on Tuesday have proved inconclusive.

Police are withholding the dead man's name until next of kin are informed.

A POLICE station interview room was not "awash with blood" on the night Jamie Stewart died, the officer in charge of the station has said.

The 22-year-old Stamford Hill electrician died in Holloway police station in July of last year after being arrested for an alleged driving offence.

Chief Supt Doug Hopkins was disputing a letter written by Cllr Derek Sawyer, chair of Islington's police community consultative group, about the controversial case.

Cllr Sawyer had written to the Police Complaints Authority to express concern that a number of questions still remain about Mr Stewart's death, even after an inquest in January decided he was killed by a massive overdose of cocaine.

In the letter, Cllr Sawyer wrote that the consultative group was "particularly disturbed" by the evidence to the inquest of the police pathologist "as to

Police chief hits back in war of 'bloody' words

the sheer extent of recent blood stains (on tables, walls and floor) at Holloway police station."

But at a consultative meeting last Tuesday, Chief Supt Hopkins said this was "dubious and misleading" to the general public. "It is misleading to imply that the charge-room was awash with blood," he said.

He added there was not a "vast amount" of blood

in there and that some of this could have come from Mr Stewart, but it could have also got there in other circumstances. "Barely a week or a day goes by when we have not got somebody shedding a few spots of blood in our charge-room," he said.

He explained that in the past week, for example, two women police officers had been bleeding in there after they had been assaulted.

"The amount of complaints about the treatment in our charge-room are few and far between, considering we deal with about 8,000 prisoners a year," Chief Supt Hopkins stressed.

After the meeting, he added: "A lay person reading that letter would have got the impression that we are smashing people up every day, but that is simply not true." He said that evidence to the inquest was from a police biologist, not a pathologist.

Cllr Sawyer is standing by his letter, pointing out that: "My letter didn't say 'it was awash with blood'. It just raised the concern that there was recent blood from, I think, three blood groups."

"I still think it was right to express that concern. Most people would be concerned about it." Cllr Sawyer added the dispute was over a matter of emphasis in the letter. The Police Complaints Authority is still investigating Mr Stewart's death.

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Investigations under way in British police forces

Of 41 inquiries disclosed, the following are cases where some details are available. Except where noted, they are supervised by the Police Complaints Authority, with the investigating force in brackets.

SOUTH YORKSHIRE:

- Allegations related to Hillsborough disaster. (West Midlands)
- Investigating false evidence allegations against Number 3 Regional Crime Squad officers. (Greater Manchester)
- Gerry Meade case. (Nottinghamshire)

WEST MIDLANDS:

- Investigation into 75 cases involving more than 360 allegations involving Serious Crime Squad detectives. (West Yorkshire)
- Inquiry into new evidence relating to Birmingham Six. (Devon and Cornwall)

- SURREY: Guildford Four case. Claims detectives committed perjury at original bombing trial. (Avon and Somerset) Unsupervised.

- RUC: Claims that RUC officers leaked details about IRA suspects to Loyalist paramilitaries. (Cambridgeshire) Unsupervised.

METROPOLITAN POLICE:

- Allegations of brutality against demonstrators outside Rupert Murdoch's Wapping plant. (Northamptonshire)
- The first inquiry ever ordered by the Inspectorate of Constabulary into leak to the BBC of Northamptonshire report to the Authority. (Hertfordshire)
- Inquiry into allegations of planting drugs and assault on young blacks in Notting Hill. Disciplinary charges pending. (Hertfordshire)
- Second inquiry into three most serious of above cases which culminated in civil actions. (Thames Valley Police)
- Shooting by Metropolitan Police marksmen of two armed robbers in north-west London last year. All such shootings have to be investigated. (Hampshire)
- Corruption allegations against detectives who investigated death of South London private detective Danny Morgan. Disciplinary proceedings pending. (Hampshire)

- MERSEYSIDE: Allegations by six convicted men against 30 officers. File with Crown Prosecution Service. (West Yorkshire)

- THAMES VALLEY: Four unspecified cases. (Surrey, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire)

- GREATER MANCHESTER: Allegations that officers on an internal investigation induced criminals to fabricate evidence against former constable Ged Corley. (West Yorkshire)

- NOTTINGHAMSHIRE: Allegations detectives helped fabricate confession of informer, Kevin Norledge, to incriminate fellow defendant in return for immunity. (Leicestershire)

- CLEVELAND: Alleged failure to find body of Julie Hogg until 10 weeks after she was reported missing. Found behind a bathroom panel in her own home. (Northumbria)

- HUMBERSIDE: Allegations that a senior officer was spotted kerb crawling in red light area of Leeds. (West Yorkshire)
- Death in custody. Investigating force not known.

- SOUTH WALES: Review for Home Office of investigation into murder of Sandra Phillips in Swansea. Two brothers convicted claim their innocence. (Devon and Cornwall)



NORTHUMBRIA:

- Corruption allegations against unnamed officer. (Cumbria)
- A detective sergeant charged with perjury and intending to pervert the course of justice over trial of two men acquitted of armed robbery. (Cumbria)

- GLOUCESTERSHIRE: Investigated into alleged unlawful arrest by unnamed detective sergeant. (Hertfordshire)

- CAMBRIDGESHIRE: Complaints over alleged harassment by numerous police officers in the March area. (Norfolk)

WEST YORKSHIRE:

- Complaints by man convicted of arson in 1985. (Greater Manchester Police). Unsupervised.
- Allegations from solicitor concerning an Initial Internal Inquiry into officers investigating death of a child. (North Yorkshire)
- Allegations that Steven Blackhouse was wrongly convicted of murder in Leeds in 1987. (South Yorkshire)

ESSEX:

- Detectives in Brentwood office of No 5 Regional Crime Squad facing bribery and corruption allegations. (Sussex)
- Unspecified case. (Suffolk)

Research: Will Bennett

Complaints Inquiries by force

Force	Under outside investigation	Investigating others	Total complaints investigated '88
Avon and Somerset	0	1	301
Bedfordshire	0	1	53
Cambridgeshire	4	2	213
Cheshire	2	2	158
Cleveland	1	1	176
Cumbria	0	2	105
Derbyshire	0	0	169
Devon & Cornwall	0	2	263
Dorset	0	0	171
Durham	0	1	105
Dyfed Powys	0	0	30
Essex			269
Gloucestershire	1	0	98
Gr. Manchester	1	1	882
Gwent			91
Hampshire	0	0	257
Humbeside	2	0	278
Kent	0	0	215
Lancashire	1	0	220
Leicestershire	0	1	352
Lincolnshire	0	0	124
City of London	0	0	42
Met. Police	6	0	2,918
Merseyside	1	7	327
Norfolk	3	1	177
Northamptonshire	1	1	185
Northumbria	2	1	264
North Wales	0	2	122
North Yorkshire	0	2	62
Nottinghamshire	1	1	262
South Yorkshire	2	1	229
South Wales	1	0	279
Suffolk	0	1	174
Staffordshire	0	0	114
Sussex	0	0	202
Surrey	1	0	107
Thames Valley	4	1	386
Warwickshire	0	0	57
West Mercia	0	0	195
West Midlands	2	1	844
West Yorkshire	4	4	690
Wiltshire	0	0	121
Central Scotland	0	0	58
Dumfries and Galloway	0	0	55
Fife	0	1	126
Grampian	0	0	148
Lothian and Borders	0	0	309
Northern	0	0	35
Strathclyde	0	0	925
Tayside	0	0	168
RUC	1	0	2,988
TOTAL	41	29	

Complaints Against Metropolitan Police

	1988	1989
Incivility	637	616
Assault	2,051	2,372
Irregularity in procedure	273	206
Traffic irregularity	58	32
Neglect of duty	505	385
Corrupt practice	53	45
Mishandling of property	179	162
Perjury/irregularity in evidence	185	166
Oppressive conduct	655	660
Racially discriminatory behaviour	42	46
Unlawful arrest/detention	442	442
Improper search	165	139
Other crime	18	11
Others	31	68
TOTAL	5,294	5,330

Source: Metropolitan Police.

Outcome of cases handled by IPCA 1988

	1*	2*	Voluntary referrals	Total
Completed	274	5,242	32	5,548
Criminal charges	21	25	4	50
Discipline (Admitted)		8		8
Discipline (Denied)	9	70	7	86
Discipline**	2	12	3	17
Officer advised etc.	29	622	4	655
No action	217	4,064	15	4,296

1*: Supervised; 2*: Unsupervised; **: Recommended by PCA. Source: Police Complaints Authority.

Outside forces examine 41 cases

AT LEAST 41 major inquiries into allegations against the police where a force is being investigated by outside officers have been identified by *The Independent*.

In individual complaints, most forces will not disclose detailed information unless it is made public. This makes it difficult to assess the seriousness of many investigations listed on the adjoining table. A relatively formal inquiry into a death in custody cannot be distinguished from a corruption inquiry.

When pressed, some forces refused to disclose information; others gave only partial details. This accounts for discrepancies in the figures. Those which refused were: Essex, Surrey, North Wales, Dyfed-Powys, Gwent, Staffordshire, Merseyside, and South Yorkshire.

Overall statistical information is disclosed in annual reports and is submitted to the Inspectorate of Constabulary and the Police Complaints Authority.

All forces have complaints departments which conduct inquiries. The size of the Metropolitan Police allows important inquiries to be conducted by officers from other areas or sections of the force or by its Complaints Investigation Bureau.

In England and Wales, lay members of the Independent Police Complaints Authority supervise the investigation of the 800 most serious or sensitive of the 4,000 case referred to them each year - involving assault, corruption or other arrestable offences. Deaths in custody, killings by police marksmen or serious injuries are automatically supervised.

The investigating officer must be above a chief inspector and approved by the authority. Outside forces investigate deaths that are controversial or in suspicious circumstances and the most serious cases, like West Midlands or Wapping. Police complaints against colleagues are treated as internal matters.

Many forces do not distinguish investigations being conducted by other forces in the statistics in annual reports. Most complaints involve assault, with accusations of incivility, oppressive conduct and neglect of duty forming the bulk of the rest. Corruption and perjury form only a small proportion.

About 5,500 cases are concluded by the authority each year. Those involving criminal activity are passed to the Crown Prosecution Service. If charges are not preferred, the authority has the last word on whether officers face disciplinary proceedings, which can lead to dismissal, fines, demotion or formal "advice".

In 1988, 14 per cent of complaints resulted in either criminal charges or disciplinary proceedings. There was no action in 10,844 of the 12,523 individual complaints, mainly because of lack of evidence.

In Scotland and Northern Ireland, investigations are carried out, internally or by other forces, without independent supervision.

IND 30. 4 - 90

Elderly couple 'are living in fear after attack by officers'

EDGAR BURKE, 76, and his wife Marie, 71, claim that one January evening last year they suffered an ordeal at the hands of police officers which left them in a state of fear and mentally and physically damaged.

The couple say they were dragged from their home in Hackney, east London, by uniformed officers who had arrived in response to a telephone call from Mrs Burke reporting an accident involving their car, which had been driven by a friend.

Mr Burke, a partially-disabled diabetic, who was ill in bed, says that when he refused to give a breathalyser sample, he was forced from his bed in his underclothes, held on the floor of a police van by at least six officers and

taken to Hackney police station.

His wife says that as she went to help her husband, she was forced to the ground by a policewoman and taken in a separate van. At the station she was held for three hours, strip-searched and charged with assaulting police.

Mr Burke says he had to wait in a side room, in his long-johns, for his wife to be fingerprinted, photographed and charged, before she was freed. The Crown Prosecution Service dropped the charge two days later.

Mr and Mrs Burke have begun a civil action for damages against police, one of about six known to have been brought against Hackney police after similar incidents over the past year in which police are alleged to have assaulted peo-

ple during arrest. The identities of the officers differ in each case.

The incidents have aggravated already tense relations between police and the local community.

They have fuelled calls for an independent inquiry in an area which for years has been dogged by allegations of police brutality and oppression against the black community and indifference to the welfare of prisoners.

The Burkes have lived in east London since arriving from the West Indies in 1956. They have five children and say they had never been in trouble before.

Both are frail and Mr Burke, a retired railway guard, walks with a stick. The couple did not want to be photographed because they were ashamed at what happened and said that neighbours would recognise them. "I was aching all over as a result of the assault. I just felt helpless and degraded by it all, full of hurt and pain," Mrs Burke said. "I have recurring nightmares about it... I cannot sleep and have to take tablets." She said the biggest degradation was the strip search.

Mr Burke was not breathalysed nor charged. "I thought they were going to kill me, when I was lying in the police van and they had me on the floor. I thought I was going to die," he said and claims that his condition has worsened since the incident.

In the House of Commons, Brian Sedgemore, Labour MP for Hackney South and Shoreditch, has named two of the officers involved as Constable Tina Martin and a Constable Hargreaves.

Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill, the senior officer in Hackney, said that he was unable to comment on the case because of the pending legal proceedings. Another Hackney case involves allegations that officers seriously assaulted a 50-



Raphael Joseph at Hackney Family Centre. He said that officers took hold of his hair and battered his head against a pavement and wall Photograph: Simon Grosser

year-old man at the end of a high-speed pursuit last July, only weeks after guidelines governing such chases were introduced following concern over fatal incidents.

Raphael Joseph was on his motorcycle returning home at 6am from working overnight at a bakery. He took a short cut, the wrong way up a one-way street, saw a police car and panicked, since he had no insurance or licence. He drove off and was chased around a nearby housing estate by several police cars.

When his path was blocked by

another patrol car, he pulled up towards the kerb. He claims that the motorcycle was struck by a police car coming from behind and he was flung on to the pavement.

"I was surrounded by a number of officers who grabbed me, took hold of my hair and started battering my head up and down against the pavement and a wall," he said.

The police car, which police said did not hit Mr Joseph, overturned and the driver escaped without injury. Mr Joseph says he was flung into a police van and passed out. When he came to in

hospital, he was on a drip feed. He had stitches across his face and spent several days in hospital.

His lawyers say they have evidence supporting the claim that his injuries could not have been caused by a motorcycle accident, as police suggested. His helmet, which he took off after the fall, was undamaged. He said: "I was giving up, surrendering, I wasn't going to fight. I had done a foolish thing, I admit, but I did not expect to be beaten up like that." He pleaded guilty to the motoring offences.

Two months later and after a report about his claims appeared in the area's weekly newspaper, he was arrested again. He says police had no reason to arrest him. An officer who visited him in hospital saw him at Hackney police station, remarked about the newspaper report and told colleagues to book Mr Joseph for assaulting police. The charge was dropped a few days before it was due to be heard in the magistrates' court.

The police officers involved claim the injuries resulted from the accident. Supt Roy Clark, of

Stoke Newington police, said: "There are two diametrically opposing versions of what happened. What he says seems to stretch credibility too far, but the matter will probably not be resolved until it comes up in the civil courts."

The Burkes and Mr Joseph have been helped by the Hackney Community Defence Association, which has been set up to help people contest their cases and pursue damages claims. It says policing in the Hackney area is "violent and oppressive" and that senior officers should resign.



Raphael Joseph in hospital after what he says was an assault by police

Sharp rise in payments to end civil actions

THE AMOUNT of money paid out each year by police forces in settlement of civil actions brought against them - which totalled at least £500,000 for the Metropolitan Police alone last year - underlines a lack of faith in the complaints system.

Most of the money paid out is only disclosed if the case is settled in open court and the media are present; settlements out of court do not usually lead to the sums being made public. Some figures have emerged as a result of media or parliamentary questioning. Most forces do not appear to include the figures in annual re-

ports; neither are they in the annual report of the Chief Inspector of Constabulary, nor collected by the Home Office.

This reticence comes at a time of a mounting number of such actions, which are mainly for false arrest, unlawful imprisonment and malicious prosecution, although a large number are for assault, because of dissatisfaction with the existing system of resolving complaints against the police. Many pursue the actions in the hope of gaining financial compensation for their grievance in courts where it is necessary only to prove the case "on the balance of

probabilities". Increasingly, lawyers are advising people with grievances not to co-operate with the complaints investigations until legal actions are completed.

Paradoxically, this allows the police officers concerned to go unpunished because their statements are needed by the complaints investigators to bring criminal charges against the officers.

Until the problem of confidence in the system is sorted out, the number of civil actions will grow, fuelled by expectations of large awards such as that of £100,000 in one of three Notting Hill cases in 1989. The West Mid-

lands Police could ultimately face a dozen actions by men claiming they were the victims of malpractice by its Serious Crime Squad.

Establishing the amounts being paid is not easy. According to figures disclosed in response to parliamentary questions, the £100,000 Notting Hill award was part of more than £500,000 paid out by the Metropolitan Police in 1989, about half of which was in out-of-court settlements.

The figures have risen dramatically since 1987, when £11,000 was paid in court and £52,000 out of court. In 1988, the figures were £170,000 and £250,000 respec-

tively. In a random selection of six other forces asked by The Independent, only the Thames Valley Police Authority replied outright that it had not paid out any money in the last three years.

West Yorkshire and Avon & Somerset said the information was there, but would have to be extracted from the files at some time and cost.

South Yorkshire Police declined, referring the matter to the force's insurers, who also refused to disclose the information. The West Midlands and Merseyside forces said the information could not be disclosed.

IND 30.4.90

Police swoop on dodgy party revellers

POLICE broke up an unlicensed party on Saturday night in Weston Walk, Hackney.

They were tipped off that "all the paraphanella for a party" was being brought into a first floor factory - and visited the site to warn the organisers of possible safety problems.

Later that night the police returned with a warrant and closed down the party. Two hundreds revellers left peacefully.

The police have reported the matter to Hackney Council.

● Police are investigating complaints about a party that took place in Millfields Road at the weekend.

MG 11-5-90

Police power, autonomy and propaganda

From Mr Graham Smith and Mr Martin Walker

Sir: In 1955 there was a furore when *The Times* made allegations about extensive police corruption in the West End of London. During the past 35 years, more serious and far-reaching allegations have been made against Metropolitan Police officers, only to be ridiculed by the authorities. Despite the Challenor affair (1963), *The Times* inquiry (1969), corruption in the Obscene Publications Squad (throughout the 1960s and the early 1970s), the crisis in the Drugs Squad (early 1970s) and Operation Countryman (1978-82) and a plethora of serious injustices against individuals and groups of people, politicians have cynically allowed the police to dictate legal reforms regardless.

Over the past 100 years the police force has developed into the most powerful autonomous organisation in British society. This power is unrestricted by magistrates or High Court judges, and rarely questioned in parliamentary debates.

Until the 1930s police officers were not legally empowered to ask any questions of a suspect. Today the police control major aspects of the criminal justice system, from interrogation through administering punishment in the police station (cautioning) to sentencing by remand. In all these powers they

are nominally accountable to one person — the Home Secretary.

In post-war Britain the police have increasingly been called upon by governments to police new boundaries between the powerful and the powerless. In determining the demarcation lines they have developed a corporate identity, with an ideology and political power, which makes them more powerful than either Parliament or multinational companies.

The process of stereotyping whole sections of society has come to be known as criminalisation, a process by which the police maintain and enforce their powers, while placating public criticism. The people most likely to be subjected to police corruption, violence and excessive use of powers are the criminalised.

Generally, complaints against the police come from criminalised communities: black people (stereotyped as illegal immigrants, muggers and drug pushers), Irish people (terrorists), trade unionists (the enemy within) and political activists (subversives); the same people who are subjected to high-profile policing in the first instance.

As the police have spent considerable resources propagandising against these people, and because of their own ideology and obsessive secrecy, they feel under no

obligation to conduct thorough investigations into complaints.

The debate on the police complaints procedure has always focused on who investigates the police. We would suggest that this avoids the central issue. Serious complaints against the police concern police criminality. Serious and thorough criminal investigations are required. The police's reluctance to investigate themselves is coterminous with their indifference to crimes against the criminalised. Scant attention has been paid to the police's disregard of such crimes as racist attacks.

What is needed is a complete reappraisal of the criminal justice system, most particularly the role of the police.

Powers have to be taken away from the police and invested in an independent tier of the judiciary which is able to intervene in all criminal investigations. If changes of this order were to be introduced, there would be no talk of police complaints. "A crime, is a crime, is a crime", and members of the public and the police would be subjected to identical criminal investigations.

Yours faithfully,
GRAHAM SMITH
MARTIN WALKER
Hackney Community
Defence Association
London, N16
2 May

14.5.90

The New Model Army in blue

From Mr John Alderson

Sir: The interesting correspondence on the police which has continued to flow since you opened the debate in your columns on 30 April has naturally tended to focus on the effects, and perceptions, of change, rather than on their cause. The letter which you publish today (14 May) from Messrs Graham Smith and Martin Walker opens up the critical area of cause.

Until the Second World War the police were often despised by the lower social orders — "all coppers are bastards" — and patronised by their social superiors. Nobody becomes a police officer to be liked — but, if lucky, to be respected.

The divisions and conflicts which have lately characterised English society (the Scots are less plagued) have resulted in a more interventionist and repressive role for the police. Thus, in their own way, the many and varied groupings which coalesce into society show resentment against the police, their perceived growing power, influence, and hazy accountability.

When the power of the media is turned on to illuminate cases of police corruption, inefficiency, deteriorating disciplinary processes, and abuses of power and force, these latent burning resentments, found in all classes now, overflow. The police lose face, and in their

own frustrations turn to authoritarianism rather than to persuasion in ordinary dealings with the management of public places. The spirit of consensus policing was finally broken by the prolonged agonies of the mining communities during the year-long operation which changed a generation of young police officers.

The condition of the police today in some ways reflects that of Cromwell's New Model Army (the rank and file) and the Major Generals (the chief constables) whose perceived yolk on sections of society eventually became unbearable. There are too many people whose frustrations with our out-dated police system, articulated by Messrs Smith and Walker, the Home Office should begin to take seriously.

The present situation is likely to continue to deteriorate since that is in the dynamic state of these affairs. The sooner we have a government willing to set up the inevitable Royal Commission on the police, the better for all concerned.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN ALDERSON
Research Fellow
Centre for Police and
Criminal Justice Studies
University of Exeter
Exeter
14 May

The writer was Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall, 1973-82.

16.5.90

INDEPENDENT

RENEWED calls have been made for Hackney Council to join the borough's police watchdog group in spite of repeated snubs.

Senior police officers told last week's meeting of Hackney Police Community Consultative group that they felt the time was now right for another approach to be made to the Labour-run council to get it to take up the seats reserved for its representatives.

Consistently refused

The council has consistently refused to recognise the consultative group since it was set up two-and-a-half-years ago calling it "undemocratic and unrepresentative of the people of Hackney."

But Hackney's top cop, Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill, said recent events had taken place in which the police and the council had been closely involved and as a result of discussions between senior police officers and the council leader, John McCafferty, he had been favourably impressed.

"With the local elections just having taken place and a new administration at the town hall the time now seems right for the group to make a further approach to the council," said Chief Supt Mulvihill.

But chairperson Betty Blomfield was less keen and said she had lost count of the number of times they had approached the council and been ignored. She said the council had made it abundantly clear they did not recognise the consultative group and wanted no part of it.

"We have repeatedly sent them their nomination cards asking to indicate who their representatives will be, but these are never acknowledged either verbally or in writing," she added.

Reserved

"Although we do not have representatives from the majority party, we do have council representatives from the two opposition parties sitting on the group. How many times are we expected to go cap in hand? They all know seats are reserved on this group."

Green Party representative David Fitzpatrick claimed lack of local authority representation had caused problems for community groups who might want to join but were held back because they feared they could lose their council grant.

"We should be magnanimous and write to the council asking them to reconsider. After all, out of the 60 members in the previous administration, only 18 now remain since the council elections," he said.

"The group would benefit from the input of the council and would be perceived as more representative of the community."

'Come and join us'

Police boost in bid to block burglars

Top cop reveals new move as break-ins spiral

ADDITIONAL police officers are being drafted into Hackney to combat a sharp rise in burglaries.

Hackney's Police Community Consultative group were told there had been an alarming increase in break-ins at its meeting last week.

Tackle

Stoke Newington's top cop, Chief Supt Peter Twist, said a major crack-down was being mounted to tackle the rising number of burglaries.

"I cannot reveal precisely what action is planned," he said, "but certain steps are being taken to combat the problem and additional officers are being drafted in for the next two

months." The continuing problem with prostitution and vice in Stamford Hill's notorious red light district was also raised.

Chief Supt Twist told the group he had attended a meeting of the Jewish Liaison Committee the previous evening where members of Stamford Hill's Jewish community had expressed concern at the "perceived increase" in vice around Amhurst Park.

He said a working group was now

by **RUSS LAWRENCE**

being set up comprising statutory bodies like the council to take a fresh look at ways of combating the problem.

The success the police and council achieved in reducing prostitution in the Finsbury Park area had dis-

placed the problem to Stamford Hill, he added.

Maxine Owen, of the North London Council of Christians and Jews, said the Stamford Hill area had become a "hotbed of vice" and blamed the courts for failing to impose "significant deterrents" on prostitutes and herb growers.

"It's no wonder most people who live in that area want to move," he added.

MOST police officers can expect to be beaten up while serving on the streets of Stoke Newington, a top cop said this week.

Stoke Newington Chief Superintendent, Peter Twist, made the comment after a young officer was battered unconscious with his own truncheon at the weekend.

Pc David Townsend, 23, was left for dead by a mob who turned on him after a two-mile car chase from Stamford Hill late on Saturday night.

After the attack he was taken to North Middlesex Hospital where he received 14 stitches in five head wounds.

Paying tribute to the bravery of the constable, Chief Supt Twist said this week: "Although a very grave assault has taken place this is by no means unprecedented."

Violence

"David Townsend is one of a number of young men and women who deal with all manner of violence every day with little or no feeling for their own safety."

"Few officers who serve in Stoke Newington division will not be assaulted at some stage during their posting in this busy inner city area - this is truly the front line."

Pc Townsend was driving a police van in Stamford Hill on Saturday night when Wpc Jane Mountford when they spotted a red Ford Escort speeding through the streets.

They chased it through three sets of red traffic lights before the car crashed by Tottenham Green. While Wpc Mountford called for assistance, Pc Townsend chased the driver.

He followed him up an alleyway where the man turned on him. Three passers-by then joined in the attack and held the constable down while the driver battered him with his own truncheon.

Pc Townsend, who lives in Stoke Newington, said after the attack: "I really thought I was going to die. I was on my knees and he was hitting me so hard I knew I would be lucky to wake up."

Wpc Mountford, 25, was treated for shock and was back on duty on Tuesday.

Anyone with details should call Tottenham CID, who are leading the investigation, on 081 801 3443.

Traffic wardens on front desk, lide dumped

Police station closed down

PLANS for traffic wardens to provide a temporary public counter service at Dalston police station have been scrapped and the building permanently closed.

The decision was confirmed by Stoke Newington's top cop, Chief Supt Peter Twist, at last week's meeting of Hackney's Police Community Consultative group.

It met with an angry reaction from members of the police watchdog group who had been told traffic wardens would deal with inquiries once Stoke Newington's new £7 million "supermarket" opened and Dalston ceased to be an operational station.

The group's chairperson, Betty Blomfield, said concern had been expressed by Ridley Road market traders about the

Market traders express concern about crime rate

lack of police presence in an area of high crime.

And she said old folk and the infirm were now expected to walk all the way to Stoke Newington police station.

Decision

Chief Supt Twist explained the decision to shut Dalston had been forced upon them by the Metropolitan Police Public Accounts Committee.

"The Met has to reduce the number of police buildings by 20 per cent, because we haven't got the money to maintain them," he said.

He told the meeting that police had increased patrols in Ridley Road market and a mobile police caravan was now based there on Fridays and Saturdays.

He said the new Stoke Newington police station had some of the best facilities of any police station in Greater London and was less than a quarter of a mile away.

"It is served by a least 10 bus routes, but if any old person cannot make the journey then they can ring the police station and an officer will visit them personally, or they can stop and talk to an officer patrolling the market."

HC 18.5.90

Big increase in assault charges

COMPLAINTS alleging assault by Metropolitan Police officers increased by more than 300 last year as attacks on officers on duty rose by 18 per cent compared with 1988, according to the force's annual report published yesterday.

There were 5,350 complaints made, a 1 per cent increase on the 1988 total. But assaults, which comprised 44 per cent of all complaints, reached a record 2,372, more than 15 per cent compared with 1988.

"It is distressing," Sir Peter Imbert, Metropolitan Police commissioner, said. "Every one will be fully investigated but it may be a reflection of a general increase in violence."

Most complaints alleging police assault arise from incidents at the time of an arrest, Sir Peter said.

Last year, 4,955 police suffered injuries from assaults while on duty; 774 were put on the sick list, an increase compared with 1988 of more than 9 per cent.

The Police Complaints Authority received 1,172 cases from the Metropolitan area, 33 more than in 1988.

By Jonathan Foster

The report said 27 officers were convicted of criminal offences, six more than the previous year, and disciplinary charges were proved against 80 officers, 44 fewer than in 1988.

Sir Peter said crime rates had risen during the first quarter of this year in line with a national trend.

Notifiable offences last year totalled 756,300, an annual increase of 5 per cent partially offset by an improved clear-up rate. Violence was recorded in 19 per cent more offences.

"Officers cleared up more crimes in 1989 than the total reported to their predecessors just over 30 years ago," Sir Peter said.

"There is no denying the police have gone through a bad patch this last year to 18 months but when we see the criticism of police, we have got to look at the reasons for the criticism.

"One has never had such an honest, open service or such a dedicated and determined one."

● A man who hit a police officer during the poll tax demonstration outside Hackney town hall in east London on March 8 was jailed for six months at Old Street magistrates' court yesterday. Russell Duxbury, aged 22, unemployed, of St Hubert's Road, Blackburn, was found guilty of assault and threatening violence.

GUARDIAN 23.5.90

IND 24.5.90



● Pc Jerry Owen (left) with Nimrod and Pc Jonathan Haywood-Percival with Merlin.

Cops put best feet forward for their four-legged friends

TWO big-hearted City Road policemen will be using their two feet to raise money for their four-legged friends in a 178-mile sponsored walk along the ancient Offa's Dyke trail.

For Pcs Jerry Owen, 25, and Jonathan Haywood-Percival, 31, are mounted officers and will be aiming to raise £5,000 which will be shared between the International League for the Protection of Horses and Riding for the Disabled.

Suitably called by the pair as the

"Two for Four Tour", they intend to set off on Sunday, June 3, and reckon they will complete the Offa's Dyke walk - the ancient boundary of England and Wales - within 12 days. It starts at Prestatyn in North Wales and finishes at the Severn estuary.

"We have never done anything like this before and it will involve a lot of hiking, so we are certainly hard in training," said Pc Haywood-Percival. The action-men cops have been training on the Brecon Beacons and climbing Snowdon at weekends to get themselves into tip-top shape.

"We get such brilliant service and dedication from our horses that we wanted to return that in some way," said Pc Haywood-Percival who has been based at City Road for four years and is busy training a new horse, Ranger.

"The International League for the Protection of Horses finds homes for horses which have retired from the police force because they are too old or are injured.

"It found a lovely home for one of City Road horses, Brigadier, which lost an eye. And Riding for the Disabled is a very good cause, too."

Police chief moves to ease Jewish race attack fears

HACKNEY'S top cop has appealed to the Jewish community not to take the law into their own hands following a spate of alleged anti-semitic attacks.

Plans by Orthodox Jews in Stamford Hill to set up New York-style vigilante groups to patrol the streets have been greeted with disapproval by Chief Superintendent Peter Twist.

"Law and order on the streets of Hackney is a matter for the police. If patrols

are implemented then the police would be called to intervene between them and the people they apprehend, with the logical result that the patrols themselves would be arrested," he said.

Recent attacks on a graveyard in Edmonton where Nazi swastikas were daubed on headstones, and incidents in Stamford Hill are not part of a sinister anti-Jewish campaign, according to Chief Supt Twist.

"I do consider that cer-

tain incidents have been exaggerated and I am concerned that needless worry has been caused to many people.

"These attacks are of a fairly trivial nature, and there is nothing to link them with a concerted anti-Jewish campaign.

"I am convinced that attacks in other parts of Europe have caused members of the Jewish community to see these difficulties in a more exaggerated light."

A time to cry out, or a time to lie low?

75

Violent attacks on London Jews bring old fears and dilemmas. Report by Adam LeBor

In the leafy north London suburb of Stamford Hill, home to Britain's largest grouping of strictly orthodox and Hasidic Jews, even the graffiti are in Hebrew.

A series of anti-Semitic attacks has sent a wave of concern through the 12,000-strong community. Both buildings and people have been targeted. Street signs have been daubed with neo-Nazi swastikas with the words "Kill Juden". The windows of school and yeshiva (male religious seminaries) have been broken regularly.

Three incidents took place in just one day before the feast of Passover last month. A teenage boy was beaten up by several youths; a man was hit on the head by a bottle thrown from a doorway and a schoolboy was taken to hospital after his glasses were shattered by a stone. In another attack a delivery driver nearly lost an eye.

And in an echo of the ghouliah outrage in Carpentras, France — when a corpse was dug up and impaled on a spike — headstones were smashed and daubed in an attack on a Jewish cemetery in Edmonton, north London, causing £20,000 worth of damage.

Perhaps the most distressing event of all was an attack on six children with a CS gas-like substance, the combination of Jews and gas sending a shudder down the communal spine. The gassing has now entered local and national Jewish consciousness, although the police say it was the result of a fight between two motorists, in which the children were innocent bystanders.

But the sudden rush of media attention, say some communal leaders, is causing an unhealthy atmosphere of hysteria to build up. When a synagogue caught fire last week from a candle, a television crew arrived.

The spate of attacks has divided both the local community and British Jewry as a whole on how to respond. Local leaders and the national Jewish establishment are keen to play down the incidents as the work of teenagers from the Stamford Hill Estate out for a fight and not really motivated by hatred of Jews. Others fear the continuing violence is the possible precursor of a new wave of anti-Semitism, connected with its rise in both West and East Europe and the collapse of the communist regimes. There is talk of hiring private security firms to protect the 100-odd public buildings and setting up vigilante patrols to guard synagogues and families, paid for by a communal tax.

For Rabbi Abraham Pinner, ex-Hackney Labour councillor and vice-principal of the Yeshodei Hatorah school, these proposals are an over-reaction. "There is no upsurge in anti-Semitism," he claims. "But there is an increase in anti-Semitic incidents."

"Whenever there is a downturn in the economy people look for scapegoats. The revival of nationalism means anti-Semitism has become more acceptable. Previously people said 'Zionist', now they say 'Jew'. I don't think the community should do anything, because it is a police issue. When the chil-



Recent racist incidents have caused fear and debate in Stamford Hill's Jewish community; some talk of organising vigilante groups; others speak of a 'normal level of harassment' and prefer to play down anxiety Photograph: Tam Pilton

dren had gas sprayed at them anti-fascists from all over the country telephoned offering to come and help. Vigilantes we don't need. We need more policing."

Stoke Newington police say the community is getting more policing. Patrols have been stepped up, police and community leaders meet frequently and each officer receives special training in the needs of the orthodox community. Senior officers admit there is cause for concern, but claim there is no significant increase in the number of attacks.

Seven anti-Semitic incidents have been recorded this year, but the police admit most go unrecorded because of the community's reluctance to report them. Concern is such, however, that a letter from the police has been circulated to synagogues asking that all daubings and attacks be brought to their attention.

"More incidents are being reported," says Chief Superintendent Peter Twist. "But many are fairly trivial attacks

heightened by media attention. We are witnessing vandalism, but we are extremely concerned that sinister right-wing activists who are racially motivated will try to aggravate the situation."

Stamford Hill boasts 35 synagogues, many just rooms in houses, 25 primary and secondary schools, six yeshivas and two female seminaries. Much of the Yiddish-speaking community has its roots in Europe behind the Elbe, but there is also a large Yemeni population. They share a common base, often working in manual and clerical jobs, but are far from monolithic when it comes to religion and politics, especially Israel.

Both the Lubavitch grouping and Gur Hasidim such as Rabbi Pinner can be described as politically non-Zionist. But while Rabbi Pinner opposes expansionism and unenthusiastically accepts Israel as a fact, Lubavitch favour keeping the West Bank for military reasons. The 300-odd Satmar Hasidim are Zionist, while the couple of dozen non-Hasidic extreme anti-Zionist Neturei

Karta (Guardians of the City) post Yiddish posters in their windows, decrying Israel's very existence as a blasphemy.

To an outsider the long coats and earlocks adopted by Hasidic and strictly orthodox Jews, in the manner of eighteenth-century central and Eastern European nobility, may all look the same, but each style of coat and hat signifies a distinctive cultural, historical and religious background.

Many locals link the recent incidents with a rise in anti-Zionism but the community has been a target of continual abuse and attacks since its arrival earlier this century. "One in four recorded racist attacks in Hackney are against Jews and that's just the tip of the iceberg," says Yacov Wise, until recently Hackney Council's liaison officer with the Jewish community.

"Get the Jewish establishment to explain that. They think anti-Semitism went out with Oswald Mosley. Now they can join a golf club or get a seat in the House of Lords they don't want to believe they are an ethnic minority."

"Hackney Council should set up self-defence classes so that women and children can learn how to defend themselves and the police must record more incidents as racially motivated. Now the vigilante idea is on hold, but it could be reactivated if officialdom doesn't get its act together."

It is a view echoed by more radical voices. "The orthodox community have not had any help for many years," says Brian Simons of the Hackney Jewish Socialist Group. "The Hasidim are the only community people think it's all right to laugh at. Their rabbis even talk about a 'normal level of harassment'. They mean events are not being organised by a fascist group. To me, any level of harassment is unacceptable."

For Hayim Pinner, secretary general of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, vigilante patrols are not the answer. "Attacks of this kind are part of a general increase in crime in a high-crime area, targeted to some extent

against Jews of distinctive appearance," he said.

But he denies the often voiced charge that the board is covering up the extent of anti-Semitism in Britain today. "We do have a community security organisation, but these matters are the responsibility of the Government and the police. We are not in favour of vigilantes. Any attack is one too many, but we are not creating alarm, panic and despondency. We are telling the facts as they are."

Even with the Board of Deputies itself, though, there are more urgent voices decrying the softly, softly approach. Not talking about anti-Semitic incidents in the hope they will go away is a bankrupt policy, says Professor Geoffrey Alderman, a board member.

"The board wants to present an image of a British Jewish community totally accepted, in a totally friendly society. But when people spend a night daubing swastikas on graves they feel they are responding to a new mood. The idea that there is no anti-Semitism

is not borne out by the board's own activities behind the scenes. Why does it have a communal security organisation, a defence department, a defence committee and a defence budget?"

Board officials admit that young Jewish men and women carry out security work at Jewish functions and buildings. And patrols of schools and synagogues are already happening, says Professor Alderman who, carrying a walkie-talkie, has carried out security work himself at a school. "There needs to be an element of self-help. Parents do security duty at schools. There is security at any large synagogue, as there should be."

Relations between the Hasidic community and the mainstream Jewish establishment can be described as businesslike at best. The vast majority of the former are members of the Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations, unrepresented on the board. But now in Stamford Hill there are many who think that when it comes to self-defence at least, it is time to emulate their more assimilated brethren.

IND 28.5.90

Jury move fails on race grounds

AN Old Bailey judge was asked to discharge three Asians from a jury because they might be prejudiced against two West Indian youths.

The unique application was made by a barrister representing one of the youths.

Mr Vincent Coughlin, defending, said that racial tension is mounting in East London to such an extent that some pupils are being bussed to school to foil attacks.

And as the trial concerned an allegation of bullying and threats to two 14-year-old Asian schoolboys, the make-up of the jury was crucial to fairness.

But his bid to get the Asians replaced on the jury was rejected by Recorder Dan Hollis, QC, who said: "This would open the door to scrutinising the races of people empanelled on a jury, and the whole basis of the jury system as we know it in this country will be destroyed if I were to agree."

The judge admitted that Mr Coughlin raised "an interesting point," but he added: "I have absolutely no doubt which way to decide it."

Mr Coughlin made his challenge to the Asian jurors on racial grounds at the start of the trial of his client, 15, who cannot be named for legal reasons, and Jason Patrick, 19, a student, both from

Hackney.

They denied attempting to rob the boys of their bus passes and cash in Hackney.

Counsel said the accused had "realistic fears" that because of a volatile race situation in the district they would not get a fair jury hearing.

The judge replied: "There could be applications to remove Protestants from juries in cases with an IRA connection."

Recorder Hollis added: "The application is made on the basis that the situation in Hackney is fraught at the moment and feelings are said to be running high. I have no evidence of it, but I act upon the basis that that is the case."

"I also understand the feelings that give rise to this application. I'm bound to say that the application goes against my gut reaction that criminal cases in this country should be tried by a panel selected at random of people of whatever race, colour, creed, religion or sex that the system throws up."

Mr Coughlin later made a successful submission that on the evidence his client had no case to answer. The judge directed the jury to acquit the boy.

But Patrick continued on trial and was convicted. He was remanded for reports and will be sentenced next month. He pleaded not guilty.

The jury heard that on October 5 last

year, Patrick, studying electronics and a part-time assistant at Hackney Empire, was "hanging about" near a school in Mare Street, where pupils have complained of being robbed.

He stopped two pupils and asked for money. When they said they had none, he ordered them to go and get him some and return to the same spot within an hour.

And he even had the cheek to hand over his own wristwatch to one of the scared boys so that they would be able to return in time.

Prosecution counsel told the court: "Despite their fear, they had the good sense to go straight to the police. Officers followed them when they went back to the rendezvous. Patrick and his younger friend were arrested as they approached the boys."

Patrick - his full address was not disclosed - was reported to have a previous conviction for burglary and to have been on probation at the time of the attempted robbery.

The judge released him on bail while calling for probation and community service reports, but warned that Patrick faced a custodial sentence and added: "I have to consider the children in this school and others in the streets where he has been hanging about with his friends."

How can two unequal parties consult?

DURING the last few weeks, Hackney police have prominently figured in a national debate on policing. The ordeals of several Hackney people, including Gary Stretch and Raphael Joseph, have been highlighted in the national press and on radio and TV. None of these cases of alleged police criminality have been resolved to date. For Gary Stretch this has so far meant three years of agonised waiting.

And Chief Superintendent Niall Mulvihill has the gall to call on Hackney Council to participate in the Hackney Police Community Consultative Group.

Since its inception three years ago, the consultative group was dismissed as a police public relations exercise by the council and community organisations alike. So far in 1990, Hackney Community Defence Association has drawn the public's attention to three further cases of alleged police malpractice - against Raphael Joseph, Glenford Lewis and William Gordon, all covered in the Hackney Gazette. About these cases we have not heard a word from the so-called consultative group.

The simple fact remains that the community is as concerned about police criminality as the general crime level. When the issue of police criminality is resolved at a political level, namely by Parliament limiting police powers, then the people of Hackney will be in a position to sit down with the police safe in the knowledge that the police are not a law unto themselves.

We only need to ask ourselves one simple question - how can two unequal parties consult? While the police have power, and the community is subject to that power, then the police are not accountable to the community, and instead of consultation, we have dictatorship. - GRAHAM SMITH, SECRETARY, HACKNEY COMMUNITY DEFENCE ASSOCIATION.

HC 1.6.90

Reward doubled in postmaster killing



● Victim Mr Patel.



● The scene of the killing in Lower Clapton Road.

THE reward for finding the shotgun killers who murdered sub-postmaster Raojibhai Patel was yesterday doubled to £20,000.

Colleagues of the 59-year-old put up an extra £10,000 to add to the reward already offered by the Post Office for information leading to the conviction of the three men.

They hit out at the massive increase this year in raids where guns were fired – and warned postmasters not to put their lives in jeopardy.

Advice

Harry Tredwell, of the National Federation of Sub-Postmasters, told the Gazette: "Mr Patel acted like a hero – but our advice to all our members is never to risk your life for money and property."

Mr Patel was ambushed on Tuesday morning by three gunmen who lay in wait for him and his wife Nimkala at their sub-post office in Lower Clapton Road.

by MAX VELODY

Hero died trying to protect post office cash

Both were handcuffed and Mr Patel, 55, was left gagged upstairs while her husband was led downstairs to the safe.

It is thought Mr Patel struggled and set off the alarm – only to be shot in the leg. He was taken to the Hammersmith Hospital, where he was found to be dead on arrival.

The robbers, two armed with handguns and one with a shotgun, made their getaway from the back of the building. They are believed to have left empty-handed. Afterwards Det Supt Russell Allen, of the East London murder squad said: "He died a hero. He was protecting

the money. "It was an extremely callous and cold-blooded murder. To attack an unarmed man in this way was reprehensible."

Tributes have poured in to Mr Patel, who had two children and had been postmaster there for 15 years. He was due to retire in a few months to his home in Edgware.

John Roberts, managing director of Post Office Counters, described him as "a model sub-postmaster, working very closely with the community. His murder is an outrage."

Fishmonger Michael George Michaels, whose shop is next door to the post office, was the first to find the Patel after the shotgun blast.

He said: "It is terrible to think this has happened to them. They were such a devoted couple."

"For 15 years they have won friends by the way they helped their customers."

Anyone who may have seen three men behaving suspiciously in the area between 6am and 9am on Tuesday are asked to contact the murder incident room on 488 5212.

Police accused of 'kicking' man wanted for motoring offence

HORRIFIED neighbours say a slightly-built man who stands less than 5ft 4ins tall was beaten up and kicked by Stoke Newington police arresting him for a motoring offence.

Herbert Jones, 22, known as "Grover" to friends and neighbours on the Nightingale Estate, has made an official complaint about the way he was arrested last Thursday evening.

Grover said: "I said to the police let me walk free to the van. I got kicked in the side of the leg, from then I was on the floor. I got kicked in the back. Another guy was almost strangling me."

Neighbours are disgusted with the police action. A former member of Hackney Lay Visitors' panel, set up to check on the condition of detainees in police cells, saw the incident.

Alice Borka, who lives in Rogate House, the same block as Grover's family, was standing on her balcony with her grandchildren when the po-

lice came round. She told the Gazette: "I couldn't believe how many officers arrived. There must have been 15 or 20. He had his hands open. They brought him into the middle of the road. I don't know how they got him to the floor."

"Then I saw these two constables kicking him. I saw three or four kicks each. Then they dragged him and put him in the van."

'Out of order'

"There were children from 11 to 12-years-old who watched this and said: 'Is this the way the police treat you when you are arrested?'"

"The police were out of order. There was no excuse for the way they acted. These officers should be punished," she said.

Another neighbour, who did not wish to be identified, said: "Grover said he was coming quietly when the whole bunch jumped on him. They

kicked him and punched him about.

"One man got him in a headlock. I told him 'let him go' but they took no notice."

Betty Blomfield, chair of Hackney Police Community Consultative Group and herself a lay visitor, was contacted about the arrest and demanded to know if Grover had seen a police doctor while he was in the cells.

She said: "I understand the same detainee went to Leman Street police station on Friday to record an official complaint. I did express my absolute disgust, if what I had been told was true."

Superintendent Stuart Gilding, of Stoke Newington police, said: "Mr Jones was arrested on a warrant granted by a magistrate in connection with a motoring offence."

"He has made a complaint about his arrest and we have submitted all papers about the complaint to the Police Complaints Authority."

Residents at their wits' end after mugging and theft on crime-ridden estate

Nightmare on Holly Street

A DISTRAUGHT woman has hit out at the "nightmare" of living on Dalston's crime-ridden Holly Street Estate after disaster struck her and her husband twice within 24 hours.

The first shattering blow hit the flaxed couple from Middleton Road – who asked us not to name them – when thieves swiped the self-employed bul-

der's car with all his tools and equipment worth £4,000, on Wednesday evening last week.

Then the next morning, when his wife had gone just yards from her front door, on her way to pay the rent, she was attacked by a mugger who snatched her handbag containing £200.

Now the couple have been left with the grim task of counting

their losses with his business being wiped out as the equipment wasn't insured.

"I just can't believe this has happened to us," the 50-year-old woman told the Gazette tearfully.

"It is a nightmare living on this estate, with all the muggers and crime. It's not living at all, it's just existing."

She said that her husband parked his car outside the house for just half-an-hour to eat his tea – when he went out the car had gone.

"That's his work up the creek as most of the tools weren't insured. It really cut me up to see my husband sit down and cry his heart out."

"Then as if things weren't bad

enough, the next morning I was mugged by two thugs just after stepping outside my own front door. I beg whoever took the car to return it as that equipment is our livelihood."

Det Sgt Martin Davies of City Road police said there had been an increase in the number of robberies on the estate over the past few months.

HG 8-6-90

Last week Matthew Butler was acquitted in court on charges of malicious wounding. His is the fourth major criminal case to be taken up in the last year by the Hackney Community Defence Association – and the fourth to be found not guilty. HCDA provided Matthew with support and a lawyer and, more crucially, tracked down the witnesses who proved Matthew could not have been guilty. The Gazette was invited to a meeting of HCDA where, in the drab surroundings of the Family Centre in Rectory Road, it came as a jolt to see the faces sat around a table, faces immediately familiar to anyone who reads the newspapers. The allegations they have made about the treatment they have received at the hands of the police have received national publicity. What is remarkable is the way they have stuck together. This is their story – MAX VELODY reports.



Sticking together – from left to right, Gary Stretch, Chas Loft, Rudolph Hawkins and Raphael Joseph.

Innocent talk

CHAS LOFT Age: 25

Occupation: Student. Address: Stamford Hill.

History: Charged with alibi at Hackney Town Hall police station on March 6. Case pending.

"EVERYBODY who is here tonight is here because they have been given a bad time by the police."

"Before the poll tax demo started I was handed a piece of paper with an HCDA number to ring for anyone arrested. When I was taken to the police station, they told me the HCDA number wasn't working. I know now that wasn't true."

"I can't really talk about my own case, since it's not to come up in court. But HCDA has played a big part in helping innocent people who got caught up in the demo and were arrested."

"It's put us in touch with each other and it's put us on to good solicitors. But even if you've got a good solicitor, you don't see that much of them. The solicitors don't have time to find witnesses to prove your case. HCDA seek them out."



"So far 19 of the people HCDA has helped have come up in court and 10 have been acquitted. Without them a lot of people wouldn't have had a case and would have been sent down. Unless the community has an organisation like HCDA, it can't fight back."

RAPHAEL JOSEPH

Age: 52. Occupation: Businessman.

Address: Sloke Newington.

History: Suffered severe injuries when arrested by police in Sloke Newington in July, 1989. Acquitted of assaulting police in January, 1990. Planning to sue police.

"I WAS a wreck of a man after the incident involving the police. I had stitches behind my ear and injuries to my lips, neck, brow, hand. I used to be a strong man who walked tall. Now I walk like a pussy cat, my doctor is seeing me for nerves."

"I am a gentle man. I cannot understand why the police did these things to me. We are all flesh and blood. I see an old woman fall down, I pick her up. I see a blind man, I help him across the road."

"We are all people, we all have parents and children to take care of. When I sustained my injuries I thought I was going to die. My daughter was just two months old. Now every day I feed her and thank God I am alive to see her."

My brother phoned Diane Abbott, who recommended a solicitor.



"It was my solicitor who put me on to HCDA. I have been coming to the meetings ever since."

"We are put on this world to help people. I hope, after my experiences, to be able to help many others who have had unfortunate experiences with the police."

GARY STRETCH

Age: 26 Address: Hoxton. Occupation: Window Cleaner.

History: Suffered severe injuries following an incident in the Limes Pub, Hackney Road, in November, 1987. Seven police constables from City Road police station have been suspended ever since and are due to face a disciplinary tribunal. Suing the police.

"WHEN I got out of hospital I was terrified. I've lived in Hoxton all my life but I moved out of London for nine months and went to Bournemouth. My dad wouldn't tell anyone where I was."

"I still haven't got over it. I still get upset. It's affected my health, my relationships with women, my career, my lifestyle. Everything. I used to like a drink with my mates. I've been in a pub maybe five times since the incident."

"I got involved with HCDA about a year ago. I come along about once a month. What amazed me was how many people are in the same boat. Ordinary people, like Raphael, Chas and Rudolph. They aren't political extremists, whatever the police might think."

"Their support has been really important to me. This incident happened in 1987 and we're still not much further forward. The delays, especially on the part of the Police Complaints Authority,



have been unbelievable. And the police officers under suspension may never be disciplined. That's something I have to come to terms with."

"It's stupid that my life is so affected by something that happened so long ago. There've been times when I felt like Jacking it all in. But the support from HCDA, all the people I've met here and my family has helped me see it through."

"A few weeks ago I was asked to turn up at the police disciplinary tribunal. The rules for it are ridiculous. I can't take my lawyer with me, I can't ask questions, I can't even

make notes. I could have felt really alone. But the phone never stopped ringing from people offering to help me, to go to court with me. It meant so much that people were willing to support me."

"In the end, the tribunal didn't happen. It may never happen. The waiting goes on and on."

"What's happened to me has made me determined to help others. In January I went on the torchlight procession in memory of those who have died in police custody. I didn't want to go to the march, I was frightened."

"There were all these police officers there and I thought, if there's any trouble, I'll be in the middle of it. But I went, although I refused to be one of the speakers."

"But when the speaking started and I saw Raphael speak, and the others, I felt ashamed. I thought, those people should know what happened to me. So I told them."

'Community must probe police abuse'

HCDA has attracted a lot of attention since it was formed two years ago. Often accused of being anti-police, it insists it is not hostile to the police, but to police malpractice – and, in the absence of a satisfactory complaints procedure, it is the community's responsibility to investigate allegations of police abuse.

Its views received unexpected backing last month from John Alderson, the former Chief Constable of Devon and Cornwall.

"Anyone who has been a victim of police malpractice and undergone an unlawful arrest suffers an horrific experience," says Raju Bhatt, solicitor for Gary Stretch and Raphael Joseph.

"It is very rare for a group like HCDA to be around to help such a person get back on their feet. The group gives victims of police malpractice information they need."

"HCDA serves a political function in giving victims a voice in the area of public discourse. It's important that their voices are heard in the public domain."

"I find myself working almost exclusively in these areas because there is so much police malpractice and very few effective channels to take these grievances any further."

"There has been an increase in the number of civil actions against the police because people have started using the legal machinery more often. The machinery of the High Court and the County Court is not really designed for such cases, but for many it is the only avenue open to them."

"We need a completely independent investigation system where the police no longer investigate themselves. It must be taken out of their hands because people no longer trust them."

MATTHEW BUTLER

Age: 16

Address: Balston

Occupation: Security guard

History: Arrested September, 1989, and December, 1989. Repeatedly stopped and questioned over a period of months. Acquitted last week on charges of malicious wounding. Planning to sue police.

"I WAS accused of being involved in a jewellery raid in Ilston Garden last year. I've never had any trouble with the police before, I'm training to be a Baptist minister."

"The first thing I knew about it was when five police officers came to my home in the early hours of the morning, handcuffed me and took me to the police station."

"The next few months were a nightmare for me. I was forced to go on an identity parade. I was followed to work by undercover detectives."

"I've been stopped by the police on more than one occasion. Police from City Road, Holborn and Enfield have all been involved. It was pure harassment."

Depressed

"In the end I got very depressed. I stopped driving because I was too scared. And I had to find witnesses to support my alibi."

"My friend put me on to HCDA and they helped me get a solicitor. More importantly, they helped me establish my alibi."

"I was at a garage in Dalston getting an MOT for my car on the day of this raid. HCDA helped me track down vital witnesses who could support my alibi."

"Since I've been coming to HCDA meetings, I've been shocked by the cases I've come across."

"When you find yourself in deep trouble for something you didn't do, it's good to have the support of others who are in the same boat."

RUDOLPH HAWKINS Age: 38

Occupation: Bricklayer. Address: Sloke Newington.

History: Charged with theft of lux disc. Sustained injuries during arrest. Case pending. Planning to sue police.

"MY CASE has still to be dealt with, so I can't talk about it. But I suffered very bad injuries after an incident involving the police earlier this year."

"I was put on to HCDA after contacting the race unit at Hackney Town Hall. They have given me a lot of moral support at a time when I've been very depressed. Until then, I hadn't come to hear of Raphael or Gary's cases before. It has really opened my eyes to what is going on."

"I'd like to stay involved with it after my case is over and done with. Not everyone can express themselves well in difficult circum-



stances, but they are an articulate voice that can defend the community."

HG 15-6-90

Action station

HOME SECRETARY David Waddington will perform the official opening of Stoke Newington's £7 million Supermarket next week.

Mr Waddington will unveil a special plaque on Thursday afternoon before going on a guided tour of the station with Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Peter Imbert.

The high-tech station opened for business in April.

Police auction off stolen property for charity share-out

HACKNEY cops are to share out nearly £3,000 next week to community groups in the borough.

The money has been raised by auctioning off stolen property recovered from prisoners for which the owners cannot be traced.

A dozen groups in the borough will benefit

including Hackney Black and Ethnic Elderly Organisation, Hackney Women's Refuge, Broadway Market Community Centre and the ninth Stoke Newington Guide group. This week another £2,000 from the fund was handed over to the Air Training Corps (Shoreditch) Squadron at an award ceremony.

TV STAR ESCAPES IN DEATH CRASH



© Lee Macdonald - 29 stills.



© The wrecked car in which two young men died, alongside the van Lee Macdonald was driving.

Two killed after police chase

GRANGE HILL star Zammo - alias Lee Macdonald, from Hoxton - had an amazing escape when he was thrown through the windscreen of a van in a police chase in which two men were killed.

Lee, from Shepherdess Walk, was driving the van home after dropping off a friend when it was hit by a speeding red Peugeot GTi as it jumped a red light at the junction of Hackney Road and Cambridge Heath Road.

The crash spun the Transit van into a lamp-post, throwing Lee 30 feet through the windscreen.

He was knocked unconscious and needed 20 stitches in a headwound. Police, who were in pursuit of the GTi, say it was stolen in the City four days earlier. The driver of the car, John Vella, 23, from Stepney, was killed instantly. His passenger, 19-year-old Peter Wynne, from Poplar, died on Monday morning in the London Hospital.

Doctors discharged Lee on Monday but he

by MARK GOULD

was too ill to speak when the Gazette called. Mum Maureen said: "It took doctors four hours to get the glass out of his head and back. He won't be scarred because the wound is in his hairline."

"He has very bad concussion. He is still very wobbly and got double vision but he definitely has not lost his sight."

"He has just got to take things one day at a time. You can't tell with injuries to do with the head. One minute he is okay, the next he's got double vision again. He doesn't remember anything about the accident."

She put Lee's lucky escape down to his fitness. He trains at Lion Boys' Club in Hoxton Street. "Lee is still in training for boxing. That's why he took the blow so well," she said.

Parked

Police say the car raced past a line of parked police cars in Hackney Road at 3am on Saturday. A car gave chase but police say they were nowhere near when the smash happened.

But Amanda Morris the sister-in-law of Peter Wynne, told the Gazette: "John Vella bought the car and believed it was okay. The police started chasing them and that was when the crash happened."

Inspector Peter Dows, of Bethnal Green police, said that the car was reported stolen but if the family could provide proof of purchase investigators would look into it.

He denied police caused the crash.

Troops Out host public meeting

HACKNEY Community Defence Association and the East London Troops Out Movement are to host a public meeting called Criminalising the Community.

Speakers from both groups will talk on police and Army harassment, stop-and-search tactics, deaths in custody, the use of plastic

bullets, and other controversial topics.

Parallels will be drawn between the situation in Northern Ireland and that in Hackney.

The meeting takes place on June 28 at 7.30pm at The Old Fire Station Community Centre, Lewin Road, Stoke Newington.

HG 15.6.90

Come and see
how your local
Police work at



the new
Stoke Newington

POLICE STATION

33, Stoke Newington

High Street, N16

Saturday 23 June 10am - 4pm

Police Dogs • Mounted Branch • Traffic Police
Scenes of Crime Officers • Fingerprint Officers

JUST AN EVERYDAY NIGHTMARE

Matthew Butler, a 19-year-old black theology student, has just been acquitted of a knifing charge. Butler avoided a potential four-year sentence with the help of a vigorous local defence campaign. But, **MARTIN WALKER** argues, these groups are fighting for their own survival as cash and commitment to police accountability dries up.

Matthew Butler started experiencing the world differently after he was accused of attempted robbery by the police last November. He became confused, suffered from insomnia, found it hard to make decisions. He was constantly fearful, felt guilty about the grief he was bringing his mother, was numbed by his solicitor's warning that he could go down for four years. On June 7, after a nightmare that had lasted over eight months, Matthew Butler was acquitted on a unanimous verdict at Middlesex Crown Court, following a vigorous campaign by the Hackney Community Defence Associations (HCDA). Butler's case is the most recent in a series of successful interventions by the HCDA in cases of police malpractice affecting Hackney residents.

For Matthew Butler, studying at the time for ordination in the church of Spiritual Baptists, the trial was the culmination of a series of bizarre and often terrifying events. Three days before the identification parade on which the police case came to be based, Butler alleges, uniformed police made several visits to his house, harassing his family. Before the trial, he alleges, they came again, hammering on the door in the early hours, waking the neighbours and telling them about the trial.

Butler was arrested early one morning in October 1989, when seven officers from City Road called at the Butler house and took Matthew away in handcuffs. He was, they said later, suspected of a series of street attacks and robberies. After being held all day and questioned but told little of his 'crime', Matthew was released.

A few weeks later, outside a garage showroom in north London, where he was working as a security guard, Butler's car was surrounded by police officers, and he was subjected to lengthy questioning. On another occasion, driving home from work, a police Rover slewed in front of him, a panda car drew up behind, and he was breathalysed. Following another early morning visit to the Butler home while Matthew was still at work, he went voluntarily to Holborn police station where he was arrested and interviewed. After the interview, the police took Matthew Butler's trainers as evidence.

The police told Butler in a taped interview that two weeks earlier, on October 25, a young graphic designer called Guiseppe Cummings was returning, after lunch, to his workplace in Hatton Garden. Reaching the second floor of the building which consisted mainly of jewellery workshops, Cummings was suddenly

attacked from behind by a man who held a knife to his throat. He was forced downstairs and into a small disused room. There, the attacker showed no interest in robbery but asked Cummings to remove his shoes and then his trousers. Cummings hit the man, and after a scuffle in which Cummings was cut on the head, the attacker ran from the room.

The police, and the Crown Prosecution Service, showed considerable confusion over the meaning of this incident. The assault, in the heart of London's diamond market, was violent and apparently sexual in motive, planned but random in its choice of victim. But according to Cummings one thing was not in doubt – the tall black man with whom he had fought was someone he had previously seen in the building.

Until two months before the attack, Matthew Butler had worked for a year making deliveries of jewellery to the building where Cummings worked. But though two other men told the police that they too had recognised a black man they passed on the stairs, some hours before the attack, only Cummings attended an identification parade. It was on the basis of his identification alone that Matthew Butler was charged with attempted robbery and malicious assault.

Even at this stage, the police must have had doubts about the strength of their case and about the wisdom of proceeding on one eye witness identification. Three months after charging Butler, Holborn police revealed another angle. They informed his solicitor of a footprint which they claimed had been found at the scene of the crime – the tread pattern of the print exactly matched one of his trainers.

The attempted robbery charge was dropped at the committal proceedings, leaving only a charge of malicious wounding. Although at the trial the prosecution brought three identification witnesses, two of them had not seen the attack. In fact, as the judge pointed out, no link could be proved between these sightings of a black man on the stairs and the attack itself.

But it was the evidence of the footprint which raised the most serious questions. Until the trial, the defence understood that the print had been found in the room where the attack took place. It turned out at the trial however, that the 'scene of the crime' (SOC) officer, attending the building the day after the attack, had examined a table left in the building's reception. The officer believed that the table had been left in the reception for 24 hours. He did not know

where the table had come from, nor who had brought it to the reception. It emerged in evidence that he had not gone to the scene of the crime itself. The police had not secured the table as an exhibit, so even its existence was in question. Guiseppe Cummings had told the police of a small square-topped table in the room where he was attacked, but the SOC officer described taking the print from a small round-topped table. Finally, while Cummings was adamant that his assailant wore Hi Tec trainers, the trainers which the police had taken from Matthew Butler were Reeboks.

From the beginning of his case, Matthew Butler had the help of the Hackney Community Defence Association (HCDA), and it was the preparatory work done by this organisation which probably secured his acquittal. At a time when local police committees are disappearing, the success of the HCDA raises the question of how the community can defend itself against police malpractice and violence.

In the early eighties, after the major disturbances in Brixton, some members of the Labour Party forced a debate about police accountability. For the first time since its inception, the party started tackling policy issues about the police. The crux of the 'new' view on policing was simple; as ratepayers paid a proportion of their rates towards the local police force, and as there was no police authority in London, the

Matthew Butler's case is like several others we've handled – arrests, releases, arrests, harassment, sequences of events that take over people's lives, and destroy them.

police should be at least partly accountable to local government.

Just seven years later, none of the Labour radicals of those early initiatives saw fit to challenge Roy Hattersley when he called for 'exemplary sentences' to be handed out to those arrested during the Trafalgar Square anti-poll tax demonstration. Labour Party policies on policing, some would argue, have turned through the eighties from critical to quiescent, with Labour policies on policing having collapsed principally because of

their relationship to other much broader issues (doubts over secondary picketing and pit closures that made them ambivalent about the policing of the miners' strike, lack of support for anti-poll tax campaigns) but more crucially, many would argue, withdrawal from identification with the previously organised industrial worker now unemployed, the inner city disinherited, the nothing-to-lose poor. These people have been criminalised during ten years of Conservative government and the demise of the GLC and Labour's reneging on the unfashionable issue of policing have led to the slow and painful crumble of most of London's inner-city police committees, instruments set up by Labour councils in the early '80s to bring about police accountability. As the committees have collapsed, so have the monitoring organisations which the committees often supported.

The HCDA's Graham Smith says: 'About two years ago Roy Hattersley started talking about stopping knocking the police. But Hackney has abolished its police unit and the consultative group is down to one and a half staff. All this is more to do with Labour's drive for power than anything else, that we're not supposed to be so abrasive about the police. When the HCDA grew out of the Trevor Monerville case, we decided that organisations like this had to stop being on the defensive all the time – the publicity shouldn't always be about the victim but about the perpetrators.'

Those police monitoring and legal defence organisations which do still exist, like the Broadwater Farm Defence Campaign and Southall Black Sisters, have been able to turn to the 'community' when their grants have been threatened and rely upon them either to raise money or lobby on their behalf. The HCDA, however, is self-financing, and determined on its inception, not to apply for any kind of grant.

'We've done the occasional benefit,' Graham Smith says, 'and people will do incredible things, put in a full week's work to help alongside working in a regular job, so they're doing 80 or 90 hours a week. But you do it because you realise there's a pattern to police abuse of power. Matthew Butler's case is like several others we've handled – arrests, releases, arrests, harassment, sequences of events that take over people's lives, and destroy them.'

Until the HCDA took up his case, Matthew Butler says, 'I felt powerless.' But over the last two years, the HCDA has had to learn difficult lessons, the most essential being that it is not possible to rely upon the structure of local or central government, be it in the hands of either political party, for support in defence of rights and liberties. ■

Matthew Butler (opposite): at first, he says, 'I felt powerless'.

Eleven arrested in poll tax riot raid

IN A DAWN raid in north London yesterday police arrested 11 people in connection with the Trafalgar Square anti-poll tax riot. Three people were later charged with committing violent disorder.

Nearly 500 people have been arrested as a result of the demonstration on 31 March. Yesterday's arrests were thought to have arisen from a study of photographs and videotape of the scene.

During the raid, doors were broken and furniture smashed in four homes around the Holmleigh Road estate, Stamford Hill.

The mother of a 10-day-old baby said four male officers pushed her almost naked into a bedroom after breaking down a door. "Eight blokes ran up the stairs screaming; two were carrying axes," she said. Her male flatmate was taken away bleeding.

By Alex Renton

In another flat a telephone had been ripped from the wall. A neighbour, Norman Blair, said: "If they want to search, fine. But this is search and destroy."

Another man, of Graham Road, was arrested but later released on bail without being charged. He said he was shown photographs of himself in Trafalgar Square.

"They threatened to do me with violent disorder, and asked me to name other people in the photographs," he said.

■ Mark Brown, 22, of St Albans, Hertfordshire, was jailed for 28 days at Horseferry Road Court, London, after being found guilty of threatening behaviour during the riot.

IND 22-6-90

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

Open day at super station

NOW Stoke Newington has a police station to take it into the 21st century you can see how it works at a special open day tomorrow (Saturday).

It'll be a unique chance to see round the new station and look behind the scenes at the conditions of policing in the 1990s.

From the charge room to the station's 999 computer link-up system, there's plenty to see.

You can even get a look at things from the criminals' point of view, and try out one of the complexes of police cells.

As well as touring one of the London's most advanced police stations

and meeting some of your local bobbies, there'll be lots of displays and fun activities to try out.

Dog handlers will introduce you to some of their canine crime-fighters, and the mounted police are also bringing along some horses for visitors to meet.

There'll be a chance to see inside a police car as well as inspecting the underwater search team's advanced diving equipment.

Scene-of-crime officers will show what they do and there will even be fingerprint officers on hand to take your "dabs". The open day runs tomorrow from 10am to 4pm.

'Supernick' is for the 21st century

STOKE Newington's new £7.5 million police station has been dubbed "Supernick" by locals - and how well it deserves that name.

From the spectacular glass frontage to the majestic towering staircase, there's nothing ordinary about this "cop shop".

Three years after work started on the huge complex, the new station finally opened in April this year - and what a station it is!

No station in Europe has a CID office as big as the one at Stoke Newington, tackling crime in one of the busiest policing areas in the country.

On top of that, there's even a suite of two offices specially reserved for major incidents like murders and rapes.

Being such a busy station, Stoke Newington has to deal with more than its fair share of crooks and has the facilities to match.

It's the only station with two custody rooms, each with a holding room for detaining prisoners temporarily, as well as a block of 12 cells for more long-term use.

Coming into line with recent legislation there are also facilities at the station to

tape interviews with suspects and witnesses, thus saving hours that can be spent writing down statements in long hand.

But it's not just suspects who'll benefit at the new station - victims will too. The new station has special facilities to allow police to respond to rapes in the best way possible.

A special rape crisis suite is sited in the quietest part of the station, for victims of sexual assaults to be interviewed in comfortable surroundings.

Fitted out like the cosiest of flats, it includes a lounge, bathroom and kitchen. There's even a collection of toys to help with child victims.

The new station is also kitted out to cope if there's a major disaster in the borough. Whether it's a plane crash or a towering inferno-style blaze, it's at Stoke Newington police station that the emergency response will be co-ordinated. A special office is manned by a team of officers specially trained to cope with such an emergency.

Stoke Newington's new police station seems ready to cope with anything!

Painting contest to decorate the walls

YOU could become a permanent fixture at Stoke Newington's new police station thanks to a super painting competition.

All that's missing from London's most advanced station is some pleasant decoration for its walls, and the Metropolitan Police want you to brighten them up.

Children, old folk and adults can enter their super painting competition with £1,000 worth of artists' equipment on offer to all you budding Van Goghs.

All entries, which must be entitled "Stoke Newington", will be displayed permanently in the station to bring it a touch of colour.

The seven categories are 5-7 years; 8-11 years; 12-15 years; 15-school leavers; others in full-time education, senior citizens; and others (residents or employees in the area).

The competition is open to anyone who lives or works within the Stoke Newington police boundary area. All entries should be no bigger than A2 in size and can be in any painting or drawing medium.

All your masterpieces should be sent to Painting Competition, Stoke Newington Police Station, 33 Stoke Newington High Street, London N16. The closing date is October 2 - six months after the station first opened in April this year.



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POLICE STATION

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High Street, N16

Saturday 23 June 10am - 4pm

Police Dogs • Mounted Branch • Traffic Police
Scenes of Crime Officers • Fingerprint Officers

FC Foreman & Partners completes services for Stoke Newington Police Station

The services for the divisional police station in Stoke Newington have been completed by FC Foreman & Partners, one of the leading firms of mechanical and electrical engineers in the country.

The Metropolitan Police required state of the art services which would meet their current needs and be flexible for the future.

These services include full air conditioning of offices, underfloor heating incorporating heating or cooling via a decentralised reverse cycle heat pump system and ventilation made up of supply and extract terminals. Heating can be provided via natural gas, gas or oil, where oil is used as a back up protection.

The building is served via an energy management system which includes an audio alarm system for remote raising of information and alarm.

The electrical installation includes an analogue addressable fire alarm system, underfloor conductor for small power data and telephones via floor outlet boxes, and a central monitoring and building data panel display locally.

The telephones fit in a special electric fire alarm fire alarm. Emergency back up power is provided for an independent central engine driven generator set.

FC Foreman & Partners is pleased to be associated with the Metropolitan Police and the design of the mechanical and electrical services for this new and advanced community police station.



FOREMANS

For further information please contact John Brown
FC Foreman & Partners
17 Grosvenor Gardens
London SW1W 0BB
Telephone 071 834 6433

Home Secretary pulls out of supernick opening

HOME Secretary David Waddington snubbed Stoke Newington police this week by pulling out of the official opening of their plush new station.

The top Tory was lined up to unveil a special plaque and declare the £7.5 million 'supernick' officially open, but pulled out at the last minute claiming he was too busy.

The let-down left Stoke Newington's top cop red-faced and disappointed. Chief Superintendent Peter Twist told the Gazette: "We are obviously dismayed. We only found out he wasn't coming last week.

"It is terribly disappointing and even embarrassing in a lot of ways. We invited people to the opening on the basis that the Home Secretary was going to be there."

Met Police Commissioner Sir Peter Imbert stepped into the breach to perform the opening ceremony yesterday (Thursday). He unveiled

the plaque before touring the station.

Graham Smith, chair of Hackney Community Defence Association, who demonstrated outside the station during the official opening, suggested Mr Waddington had pulled out to avoid controversy.

"Considering the demands we have made to the Home Secretary for a public inquiry into the policing of Hackney, it would be a bit of a slap in the face to the local people if he had come to open the station," he said.

A Home Office spokesperson rejected claims that Mr Waddington had decided not to come because of the demonstration. "That is absolutely not true," he said.

"It is purely and simply because of parliamentary commitments. You can never set the Home Secretary's diary in tablets of stone because of what may or may not be coming up. But he does hope to visit at some other time."

Police put in hotline for the deaf

POLICE are getting in tune with Hackney's deaf population by becoming the first in London to operate special telephone facilities for the hard-of-hearing.

The special telex-type system was installed this week and the first call was due through as London's top cop, Sir Peter Imbert, visited Stoke Newington police station yesterday (Thursday).

Chief Superintendent Peter Twist, of Stoke Newington police, said: "There are quite a lot of deaf people who live in the Stamford Hill area, so we're sure this will be well used."

Many large companies have the "Minicom" system, which allows deaf people to use a phone as long as they have a special keyboard linked to their phone.

After phoning a special number, deaf people can type a message into their own keyboard and send it down a phone-line to the station's own computer screen and printer.

The police can then reply by typing in their

own message and sending it back. Police officers at Stoke Newington who were taking sign language lessons saw the Minicom in action and suggested getting one installed when they returned to the station.

And because Stoke Newington will be the only station in London with the facilities, it will take calls for stations all over the capital.

"Being the first station to have a minicom, we really have no idea what the demand will be," said Mr Twist. "We do expect some calls other than from people living in Hackney."

"If we find we are getting a lot of calls we may need more staff to work with it. But at the moment it's very much a step into the unknown."

● Deaf people can use the special hotline by calling 071 923 3834.

HC 22.6.90



● PC Michael Shaddock lets 10-year-old Bilal Mehtar take the controls of a patrol car at the police station open day on Saturday.

MP snubs VIPs to join in anti-police demo

HACKNEY MP Diane Abbott boycotted the official opening of Stoke Newington's new police station last week to join a demonstration against alleged police violence.

The snub overshadowed the big day last Thursday when London's top cop, Sir Peter Imbert, came to officially open the station.

The MP for Hackney North and Stoke Newington turned up for the posh reception, buffet and tour but spotted a Hackney Community Defence Association demo.

After speaking to the protesters, she decided to show her support by refusing to go into the station and join their demonstration instead.

Ms Abbott said: "I joined them because, like many local people, I'm sceptical about the promises being made by police."

"You can't judge much from an open day when the cells are empty and the station is on its best behaviour."

She added that she is trying to set up a tour of the station during normal hours when the "ill accompany families of people who allege they have been victims of police violence."

Graham Smith, secretary of Hackney Community Defence Association, who organised the demonstration said: "It's good that Ms Abbott took a stand for the community."

Chief Superintendent Peter Twist of Stoke Newington police said: "I was obviously disappointed that Ms Abbott declined to come in for the opening ceremony, but I respect her views and decision not to."

"We have an excellent relationship with her and she was a frequent visitor to the last police station. I'm sure nothing that happened on Thursday will affect that relationship."

He added: "I would welcome any visitors accompanying Diane Abbott who may have had criticism of the police in the past."

"When they've seen the new station and met some of our officers, I'm sure they will find their view of the police have significantly changed."

□ Mr Twist said he was "very encouraged" by Saturday's open day and predicted a flood of applications from black men and women who showed an interest in joining the Met.

Police launch dawn swoop

ELEVEN people were arrested when detectives investigating the Trafalgar Square anti-poll tax riot raided six homes in Stamford Hill and Dalston last Thursday.

Officers armed with sledgehammers and axes launched the dawn raid at addresses in Holmleigh Road and Dunsmore Road in Stamford Hill, and a bedsit in Dalston.

The swoop, launched as part of "Operation Canaby", was condemned by Hackney Community Defence Association who are defending four men who were charged.

HCDA secretary Graham Smith claimed police used "excessive force", adding: "These raids were carried out as if the police were hunting an IRA gang."

Police ransacked homes, smashed furniture, ripped up floorboards and threw belongings around, he claimed. In one case, he said, nine officers charged into a room where a mother was sleeping with her 10-day-old baby. He added that seven of the 11 arrested people say they weren't even at Trafalgar Square on the day of the riot. All seven were released on police bail without being charged.



● Excessive force left property in a mess say Hackney Community Defence Association.

HCDA also denied press reports that those arrested were linked with animal liberation bombers.

A spokesperson for Operation Canaby defended the police tactics. He said: "You have to bear in mind that the people we were arresting are being charged with serious offences including violent disorder."

● Four of those arrested appeared at Bow Street Magistrates' Court last Friday. The charges included violent disorder, possession of drugs and theft.

Muggers run amok

MUGGERS went on the rampage in Hackney last week, with street robberies double the usual total.

Among the victims was a 22-year-old company director, who was robbed in his car in Wardle Street, South Hackney, last Tuesday. Two men grabbed cash and cheque books from his pocket after tapping on his window saying they had a gun.

A day later a 43-year-old woman fought off a man who tried to grab her shoulder bag in Mandeville Street, Lower Clapton.

On the same day a 25-year-old woman had rings, valued at £2,000, wrenched from her fingers by two men who attacked her by the garages at the back of Keddestone Court in Redwald Road, Homerton. They also took a purse containing £40.

On Friday, a 26-year-old man was ambushed and punched by two men in Lower Clapton Road. His credit cards and £25 cash were stolen.

On Saturday, a man asked a woman, who works as a British Telecom engineer, for directions at a bus stop in Kenworthy Road, Homerton. He got away with a chain worth £150.

Waiting

A 34-year-old housewife waiting in a car for her husband was robbed of rings, chains and other jewellery, worth a total of £500, on Saturday in Amhurst Road, Dalston.

On the same day, a 34-year-old man was asked to change a £50 note by a man who stopped him on the Kingsmead Estate, Homerton. When the victim had counted out £45, the robber said "that will do", grabbed the money and ran off.

This week the crime wave has continued. On Sunday, at Jam, a 25-year-old woman was thrown against a wall in Downs Park Road, Lower Clapton, threatened with a knife and robbed of £400 worth of jewellery.

On Monday a 23-year-old man wound down the window of his car to help a man who claimed to be lost and then drew out a knife. The driver accelerated away before the knifeman could strike.

And on Tuesday a 44-year-old woman was grabbed, by Millfields Pond in Lower Clapton Road, by a man who punched her and stole a necklace worth £400.

Anyone who may have witnessed any of these incidents is asked to contact Hackney police on 071 488 7211.

HC 29.6.90



● Leonie Vergauwen - got probation.



● Detective Inspector Eric Bowker - in charge of the squad.

Mum gets probation over her son's death

A CRUEL, drug taking mother who dabbled in Black Magic and watched her lover beat her son to death was freed by an Old Bailey judge on Friday.

Leonie Vergauwen, 31, wept in the dock when she was told she was not being sent to prison for assaulting her five-year-old son, Danny.

Last month her common-law husband, Gerald Dowden, 30, a gardener from Drumchapel, Scotland, was jailed for life for the little boy's murder.

The court heard that Danny, tiny and frail with a speech impediment and hearing difficulties, was battered with a pool cue handle and punched to death at the family home in Malmesmead House, Kingsmead Estate, Hinneron.

Vergauwen, who boasted to neighbours that she is the stepdaughter of a judge, was cleared on manslaughter but convicted on two charges of cruelty to Danny between 1986 and last September.

A former grammar school girl from Kew, Cumbria, and an accomplished artist and drama student, Vergauwen was

said to have drifted into a world of squatting and drug taking on her arrival in London.

After being remanded for reports she faced a maximum sentence of 12 years today, but walked free on three years probation.

An inquiry is due to be opened soon by Hackney Council into the circumstances surrounding the child's death.

The judge told her that, because a jury last month cleared her of any culpable part in the death of her son, he put the murder "totally out of my mind" in passing sentence "save that, you have lost a child."

The judge warned Vergauwen that she had come close to going to prison straight away and he said that if she broke the terms of probation - with a condition to live and work as directed by a probation officer and have psychiatric treatment if necessary - she would be brought back to the dock and jailed.

Social workers described Vergauwen - she wept throughout the brief hearing - as a "changed woman."



● Little Danny Vergauwen - punched to death.

Children often suffer in silence say police team

WHEN little Danny Vergauwen died in agony on Homerton's Kingsmead Estate last year, it was detectives from Hackney's Child Protection Unit who were called in.

The nine-strong squad dealt with more than 300 cases of child abuse and child sex crimes in the borough last year, including seven deaths (five turned out to be tragic accidents, the other two were murders). This year the figures look set to be even higher, and police admit it is just the tip of the iceberg - thousands of children suffer in silence,

their tormentors never brought to justice.

In the 18 months since the special unit was formed, it can boast a remarkable clear-up rate of 90-per-cent, and only one case has ever been lost in court. Its success is clearly due to the dedication of the protection team, each one a volunteer and hand-picked for the job.

Their headquarters is in a block of pre-fab cabins at the back of Stoke Newington police station, designed to put children at their ease. None of the team wear uniform, and the interview rooms are colourfully decorated with kiddies' paintings on the walls, with toys and books close to hand.

Lorraine Chester, 29, is one of four women constables who quiz the youngsters. "Children don't lie about people who rape or bugger them," she said. "Out of all the cases I have dealt with, there was only one I ever doubted."

"When they come here, the first thing we do is stuff them silly with sweets and get them to play games. Some children settle down with you straight away, others take

hours. But you can never rush them, you have to gain their trust if they are to reveal their secrets to you."

"Many children, particularly those who have been sexually abused, are very reluctant to 'tell' against 'daddy' - they feel this incredible, awful guilt. Often the children only find out that what is being done to them is wrong, by talking about it at school to friends of the same age. They say, 'But every daddy does it to his daughter, doesn't he?'"

The man in charge of the squad is Detective Inspector Eric Bowker, 47, who has 26 years experience in the police force. He has been married for 25 years, and has two children - an 18-year-old son and a 21-year-old daughter.

"The Child Protection unit is a very close-knit and informal team," he said. "The job demands maturity and sound common sense, since we regularly discuss cases of an intimate and sexual nature and it would be self-defeating to be embarrassed."

"Some of the cases are extremely distressing and I demand that my staff discuss them both with me and

among themselves so that no one person is subject to undue stress."

But however horrifying the details of the attack and however helpless the child, not all abusers are prosecuted. Occasionally, it would actually be more harmful for the child to see a parent imprisoned for many years than it would be to allow the abuser to go free.

Obviously, a close watch is kept on the family if it is decided not to prosecute. "But why should the child be punished?" said DI Bowker. "They've done nothing wrong. Ultimately, the welfare of the child is our top priority and sometimes that means a caution for the abuser."

Despite their success, the squad knows they cannot afford to relax their vigilance. "There is a strong possibility that there are paedophile rings active in the borough," said DI Bowker. "We see just the tip of the iceberg. There is far more abuse taking place in Hackney than comes to our notice."

There is a special confidential hotline for children who have been abused. Phone 071-488 7168.

HC 29.6.90

ANGELS TO THE RESCUE

Vigilante group to patrol streets as mugger leaves pensioner for dead



● Eric Williams.

Family to lodge claim

THE family of a man who died in a prison cell are demanding compensation from the Home Office.

Eric Williams, 59, was found dead in his cell in Highpoint Prison in Suffolk with a plastic bag over his head.

Despite a search of his cell by police, no suicide note was found - leading his family to fear he had been murdered.

But a suicide note did turn up two weeks later in the bag of belongings handed over to the family by the prison authorities. The note was heavily critical of conditions inside the prison.

His daughter Lorraine, 26 is demanding compensation for the anguish caused by the missing note.

"At the time he died, the Strangeways riot was in the news and there had been a minor disturbance in his own prison. When we heard of his death, we feared the worst," said Lorraine.

The family's solicitor, Stephen Cragg, has written to the Home Office asking for compensation. If it fails to comply, the family will institute legal action.

An inquest held on June 26 decided that Mr Williams committed suicide.

A spokesperson for the Home Office told the Gazette: "If the family wish to make a claim, it will be considered on its merits."

"All the matters, including the suicide note, were considered at a full public inquiry. As far as I am aware, that was to the satisfaction of the coroner."

A PENSIONER is fighting for his life after an horrific daylight attack as he prepared to celebrate his wedding anniversary.

Hardened detectives have been sickened by the brutal mugging, which has been condemned by Stoke Newington's top cop, Chief Supt Peter Twist.

Now vigilante group the Guardian Angels have reacted to the fears of local people and stepped up their patrols to cover the streets of Hackney.

Alec Leslie, 78, was attacked last Thursday as he picked up his Ford Escort from a car park behind his home in Cambridge Court, Holmdale Terrace, Stamford Hill.

A man jumped out of the shadows and smashed him over the head with a club before ripping a £22 watch from his wrist and grabbing his driving licence and AA card.

Mr Leslie, who was about to go out with his wife, Nancy, to celebrate their 13th wedding anniversary, was taken to Homerton Hospital. He took a turn for the worse later that day and was transferred to Bart's where he had two brain operations.

As the Gazette went to press he was still in a coma in intensive care. Leading the investigation is Det Insp David Wood who said: "This really was an horrific attack - let's get

● BELOW: The Guardian Angels - planning to make the streets safe.

by MARTIN TALBOT

this man before he does this again."

Two hours after the attack, Maisie Davis, 49, was left with a broken nose and cuts to the face and head when a man smashed open the front door of her home at Clapton Common.

She was taken to Homerton Hospital and detained overnight.

Chief Supt Twist said: "We are extremely concerned about the severity of these attacks."

"They reveal the extremes to which certain criminals are prepared to go to rob and steal."

Concern shared

The concern is shared by the Guardian Angels, who have stepped up their fight against crime by launching their first-ever street patrols near Finsbury Park Station.

Leader of the Angels' London Chapter, Colin Hatcher, said: "We have started patrolling the streets around Finsbury Park because so many people on trains said we should."

"People have been asking us to patrol here for some time. Some of them are very frightened to walk through the area."

● Anyone who has any information about the attack on Mr Leslie should contact the incident room at Stoke Newington on 071 923 3294.



HC 6.7.90

No signs of improvement as muggings rise again

MUGGERS went on the rampage in Hackney yet again last week - the second consecutive week in which street robbery has shown a sharp increase.

A chain was snatched from a 20-year-old secretary by a gang of four youths who attacked her as she boarded the W156 bus in Mare Street last Wednesday.

A 65-year-old woman was forced to the floor and had a chain worth £50 taken from her neck last Friday as she walked towards her home on the Trelawney Estate.

Cash totalling £500 was snatched on Friday from a 34-year-old man as he walked through the Kingshold Estate. A 42-year-old

pedestrian was attacked in the early hours of Saturday morning by four men who jumped out of a car in Lower Clapton Road and took his watch and £60 cash.

On the same day, a 19-year-old machinist sitting on a 277 bus was robbed of a £100 chain, two youths knocked over a woman as she stood in Graham Road, Dalston,

grabbing a chain from her neck, a 23-year-old woman was robbed of £300 in cash and jewellery by a man who attacked her in Alantmore Terrace and at 5pm a 16-year-old West German was robbed of his gold chain as he walked towards the Millfields camp site.

If you have any information call Hackney CID, 488 7211

Council all set for U-turn over police watchdog group

AFTER snubbing the borough's police watchdog group for three years, Hackney Council appears to have had a change of heart and is now considering taking an active role in it.

The U-turn follows a renewed approach by Hackney's Police Community Consultative Group to get the Labour-run council to take up the seats reserved for its representatives.

Ever since the consultative group was formed under Home Office guidelines

by RUSS LAWRENCE

three years ago, the council has consistently refused to recognise it, calling it "unaccountable, undemocratic and unrepresentative of the people of Hackney."

But at Monday night's meeting of the police consultative group there were indications that the council's ruling Labour group now appears to have softened its hard line attitude and is interested in participating.

Council leader John McCafferty

makes it clear in a letter of reply to the group that Hackney Council is in favour of a consultation arrangement between the police and public.

But what concerned him was how best the local authority could be represented as a corporate entity, rather than a group of political parties.

Under the consultative group's constitution the council is allowed three representatives from the ruling party and one each from the opposition, but it would be entitled to two additional representatives now the local authority has taken control

of education.

Chairperson Betty Blomfield feared that an increase in the number of representatives from the local authority might lead to the group being politically hijacked.

"We have to be very careful to ensure the group remains free-standing and not controlled by any organisation," she said.

But Tory group leader Joe Lobenstein welcomed it wholeheartedly.

"I'm amazed," he said. "The Labour Party in its election manifesto made an express point of improving its relationship with the police."

"Just cast your minds back to four to eight years ago and it would have been unthinkable."



Top cop gets medal award

A COP who helped investigate the activities of the Kray Twins before reaching the rank of the East End's number one policeman has been awarded a top commendation.

Metropolitan Police commander George Ness, aged 50, who is based at City Road police station, received the Queen's Police Medal for his professional determination, courage and ability.

He joined the police after leaving school and has received 12 commissioner's commendations.

During his time with the Flying Squad he in-

vestigated the East End's most famous gangsters, The Krays.

He became district chief superintendent for Tower Hamlets in 1983 and three years later was promoted to commander of East London, one of the capital's busiest areas.

Between 1988 and 1989 he headed the Crime Investigation Priority Project, a major research programme aimed at increasing efficiency and effectiveness in crime investigation and which implemented far-reaching and radical changes in the organisation and direction of detectives in London.

Murder bid charge dropped against three Bengali youths

CAMPAIGNERS are calling for police to drop all charges against four Bengali youths accused of stabbing a white man following a "Rights for Whites" march through the East End.

The four, Malik Miah, Abdul Halim, 17, Abdul Alim, 16, and a juvenile, who cannot be named, were charged originally with the attempted murder of Terry Swinney after the incident in Harford Street, Stepney, in March. Now all but Malik Miah have been accused of lesser charges.

"We believe that they are being used as scapegoats by the police," says Nigel Lewis, of Workers Against Racism. "The number of officially reported racist attacks more than doubled last year and young Bengalis have been forced to defend themselves."

"The response of the authorities has been to arrest any young blacks who stand up to racism. We want the charges against the four dropped, police harassment of

Bengalis to cease and racist attacks challenged wherever they occur."

Sara Bibi, Malik Miah's mother, said that the family had suffered racial attacks for the last eight years.

In July, 1984, Malik's brother, Mukith, was slashed across the back with a knife and needed 20 stitches in the wound.

On Monday he was awarded £5,000 criminal damages, £1,500 of which he will have to use to pay legal bills. The attackers were sentenced to community service.

In May, 1986, Sarah's husband had both his legs broken when he was attacked as he came home from prayer. He is still registered as disabled. No-one was arrested.

"All through these attacks we have had to fight for the police to treat them as racially motivated," says Sarah.

"Now one white man gets stabbed and they arrest four Bengalis - my son being charged with attempted murder."

Hackney youth sue police

Hackney Community Defence Association are planning to sue the police for damages, on behalf of three black youths who claim they were abused and beaten up by local officers the weekend before last.

According to an HCDA spokesperson, the three boys – aged between 13 and 14 – were coming home after a family get-together, when they were chased and set upon by the police. 'Another youth, no-one to do with them, had thrown a stone at a window,' the HCDA told CL. 'Suddenly, an unmarked saloon car pulled up, and the three found themselves being chased by police across Hackney Marshes, into the bushes and the canal.'

One of the youths, known as 'Junior', claims he was truncheoned by two police officers, on the front and back of the head, when he tried to defend himself from their blows. His injuries were so severe that he had to be treated at Homerton Hospital, and later suffered from hearing problems. He and his friends say they were repeatedly called 'niggers' and 'black bastards' by the police, and threatened with having their heads kicked in.

The three were taken to Hackney police station after the incident, but no charges were made. The HCDA commented: 'We are sick to death of this rampant and completely unprovoked violence by the police. They're behaving like right-wing, racist vigilantes. They've got to be brought to justice.'

JUDY HIRST

CL 26.7.90



● Murder victim Baldev Hoondle - gunned down in his shop.

STREETS OF FEAR

MP joins call for probe into police beating claim

HACKNEY MP Brian Sedgmore has asked the Home Secretary for an independent inquiry into claims that two teenagers were beaten with truncheons and kicked by police.

And the mother of one of the boys has joined a call by police watchdog group, Hackney Community Defence Association, for the sacking of three police officers alleged to have taken part in the attack.

The MP for Hackney South and Shoreditch put down a written motion in the House of Commons on Wednesday demanding an inquiry and criticising the action of the officers which he said "damages the reputation of the local police force."

The boys, all aged 14, say they were walking across Hackney Marshes in the early hours of Sunday morning three weeks ago with two other boys following a party on the Kingsmead Estate.

After an incident when a car window was smashed police arrived in Daubeney Road, Lower Clapton, and detained one of the two other boys.

Then two more unmarked cars arrived and a number of men gave chase over the bridge.

The boys got scared and ran. Two of them hid in bushes.

The mother of one of the boys told the Gazette: "When the boys came out of the bushes one of the officers started to punch my son. He blocked the punches by putting his hands up to his face. So the policeman got out a truncheon and hit him on the side of the head. He was staggering across the park when another gave him a blow on the back of the head."

"That blow knocked him down so they pulled him up, punched him in the stomach and pushed him in a car."

"His friend was knocked to the ground with one punch and he was kicked when he was on the floor. The other boy saw all this going on and jumped in the canal out of fear. He was kept for two hours in cells in wet clothes."

"When I got my son out of the police station we took him straight to Homerton Hospital where he was kept under observation for four hours. I want names of the police who did this. I want them suspended."

A police spokesman said four boys had been arrested as a result of an incident involving damage to a car near Hackney Marshes and investigations were still continuing.

"If we receive a complaint then it will be investigated via the proper channels but I could not comment on any proceedings in the House of Commons which may involve the Home Secretary," he said.

Safety alert after second shopkeeper is murdered

FRIGHTENED Asian shopkeepers in Lower Clapton Road are threatening to arm themselves with pistols after the second cold-blooded murder there in two months.

Following the execution-style killing of G and H Off Licence owner Baldev Hoondle in front of his teenage son last Sunday night, they say the police can no longer guarantee their safety.

The shooting happened just 200 yards from where Raajibhai Patel was gunned down early last month during a robbery on his sub-post office.

Despair

No-one has yet been arrested for Mr Patel's murder, despite a £20,000 reward - and the scared Asian community despair of his killer ever being caught.

Mr Hoondle, 42, was shot through the head by a single bullet from a silver pistol after two men came into his shop at 10.30pm and demanded beer and cigarettes.

Without saying another word, they put the barrel of the gun behind his left ear and fired at point-blank range - killing the shopkeeper instantly in front of his 18-year-old son.

When police arrived, a worker at the off licence had the dead man cradled in his arms.

Now other shopkeepers in Lower Clapton Road, Lower Clapton, fear they could be the next target for the killers and are demanding police patrols be stepped up in the area.

Mushtaq Yousoof, who owns a nearby newsagent, said: "Most of us round here are frightened the same thing could happen to us. If these people can kill for a few pounds, they could kill anyone."

Shotgun

"I was held up by a man with a shotgun last year, but I didn't bother reporting it to police - what can they do? I'm not happy with them, they're not doing enough."

"I'd like to keep a pistol here myself, it's that serious. We're all very worried."

But Hackney police warned the traders they would never be given a gun licence to protect their shops.



● Police photo of the man who shot Mr Hoondle.

by STEWART FOWLER

Chief Insp Norman Mackenzie said: "It is a frightening escalation of the problem, but legally they cannot arm themselves without a licence. We are sympathetic to people who feel that threatened and vulnerable, and we are increasing police patrols in the area."

After the shooting, the two men - both black, aged 30, 5ft 10ins tall and with slight pot bellies - fled on foot down Rowhill Road into Clarence Road and then disappeared somewhere around Downs Road.

But they left two vital clues behind. In their haste to escape both dropped their hats and police hope someone will recognise them. The first is made of beige suede, with a multi-coloured pattern on top; the other is a trendy black-and-white British Knights baseball hat.

Anyone with information should contact the murder squad on 071 488 6595.

No action against police over Jamie Stewart case

NO DISCIPLINARY or criminal charges are going to be brought against any police officers, following an investigation into the disputed death of Stamford Hill electrician Jamie Stewart in Holloway police station in July last year.

The investigation was carried out by the Metropolitan Police under the supervision of the Police Complaints Authority.

The report from the investigation is not going to be published.

A spokeswoman for the Police Complaints Authority said: "We cannot discuss the conclusions of the investigation."

"It is a private matter between the complainant, police and the authority."

The death of Mr Stewart, 22, who lived on the Stamford Hill estate, sparked controversy.

An inquest in January decided that he was

killed by a massive cocaine overdose after he was arrested late one night in Finsbury Park for an alleged driving offence.

At the inquest, which recorded a verdict of misadventure, police claimed that he had become violent in the police station and had to be restrained forcibly.

A 16-year-old boy who was arrested with Mr Stewart and also taken to the station alleged that police had kicked and beaten Mr Stewart.

HG 27.7.90

Youths point finger at Hackney police

THE behaviour of police officers based at Hackney has come under public scrutiny once more following allegations by three local youths who claim they suffered a brutal assault in a recent incident in Hackney marshes.

The boys, aged between 13 and 14 were returning home from a friend's party. They said they were chased and attacked by police officers, who were investigating a broken car window.

One of the boys said he was so frightened he jumped into a nearby canal. The second boy claims he was pun-

by Eric Burnett

ched in the face on two occasions and the third boy claims he was truncheon-whipped on the head, back and shoulders.

The boys also allege they were repeatedly called "niggers" and "black bastards" and threatened with further violence. They were taken to Hackney Police station but were not charged.

The Hackney Community Defence Association (HCDA) has called for an independent public inquiry into the incident. A spokesperson said: "The inquiry should also pay proper attention to all the incidents of police

malpractice in Hackney over the past twenty years."

In a House of Commons statement made last week Brian Sedgmore, MP for Hackney East, also called for an independent inquiry into the incident.

The HCDA also state that the police officers responsible for the assault should be suspended pending full investigations.

The mother of the boy who was truncheoned said she took him to hospital because he was losing his vision. He also sustained extensive bruising and was off school for a week, she said.

She and another mother plan to sue

Hackney police with the assistance of the HCDA and will be consulting solicitors.

A spokesperson from the Scotland Yard Press Bureau said: "Four youths were arrested by police officers on the Hackney Marshes on July 8.

This happened after a member of the public reported seeing criminal damage being done to a motor vehicle and several youths attempting to steal from it.

"Police officers attended the Marsh. There was a brief chase and one of the

youths fell into the canal while trying to escape. The youths were arrested and released pending further enquiries. No complaints about the incident have been received and any made will be fully investigated."

CARIBBEAN TIMES 31.7.90

● Schoolkids were beaten with truncheons, punched in the head, and called "nigger" and "black bastards" by bully boy coppers, it has been claimed.

The three boys, aged between 13 and 14, were going home from a family party when they say they were chased by at least four police officers.

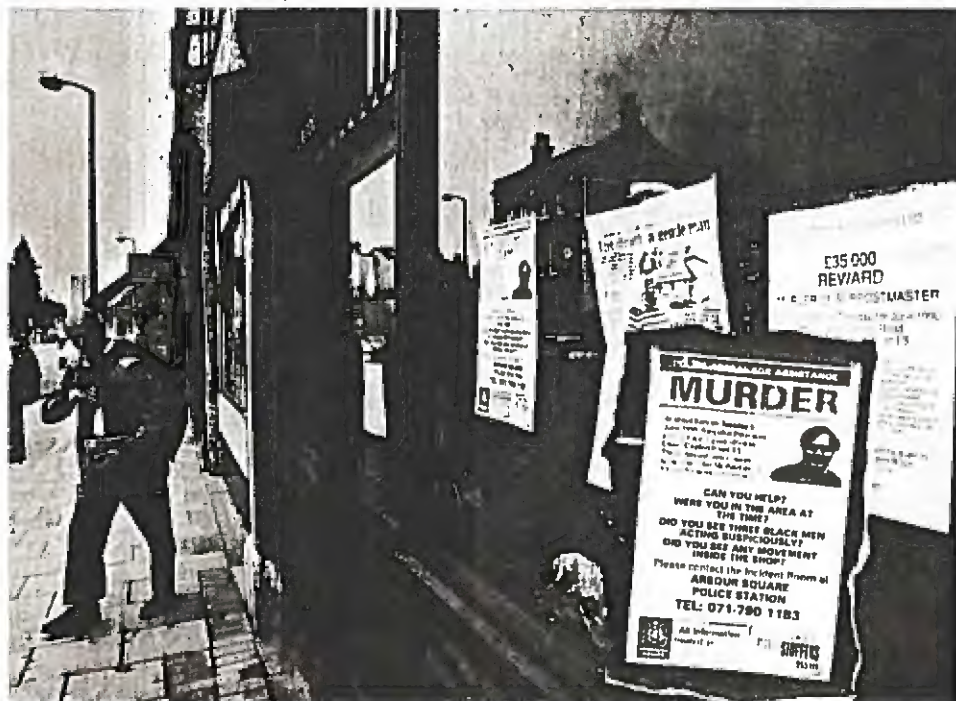
One of the boys was so frightened that he jumped into a canal risking his life. Another was clubbed about the head, back and shoulders with a truncheon and the third was punched in the face.

They were then taken to Hackney police station and questioned about a broken car window before being released without charge.

One of their distraught mothers said: "It's got to the point that I'm more worried about police than child molesters when my son goes out".

VOICE 31.7.90

'We get people in here stealing food and threatening us with knives five or six times a week. But we never report them because by the time the police come we've dealt with them.'



● Half the people tried so far for poll tax violence at a demonstration in Hackney in March have been acquitted.

Fifty-seven people were arrested at the anti-poll tax demonstration outside Hackney town hall during which mounted police charged at the 5,000-strong crowd. The demonstration led to rioting and looting.

Charges ranged from affray to actual bodily harm and violent disorder. But the 50 per cent acquittal rate — 13 of the 26 cases — has led to allegations that police have tried to fabricate evidence.

Hackney student Chas Loft, 25, who was acquitted last Friday, told *TO*: 'They couldn't produce the officers I was supposed to have tried to hit and kick. They just didn't exist.'

Christina Kent

While the gory details of the Holloway 'bodies in the car' murder of two young career women dominated last week's front pages, two equally brutal killings in nearby Clapton received little attention.

On the same day that the women's bodies were discovered in Holloway, shopkeeper Baldev Singh Hoondle was shot once in the head at point blank range in his supermarket/off-licence. He had been attacked by two men who burst into the store as he was closing up for the night. Hoondle, 42, died almost immediately at the shop he had built up painstakingly over the past seven years in Lower Clapton Road, Hackney. His 18-year-old son sensed danger when the two men demanded cigarettes and beer. He shouted a warning in Punjabi. It was too late.

The Hoondle murder occurred close to where, just six weeks earlier, sub-postmaster Rajibhai Kumari Patel had died at death after being slashed and shot in the groin by three masked men who were waiting for him early one morning. Ironically, Hoondle had just bought safety grilles for his shop following the Patel murder. And he always kept a long knife behind the counter.

Patel, 59, was killed on June 5. His attackers, armed with handguns and pistols, handcuffed him and his wife, Nirmala. They taped Mrs Patel's mouth and forced her husband to accompany them downstairs. Seconds later Mrs Patel heard shot. When the raiders fled she found her husband's body behind the counter. He had refused to hand over cash. The *Daily Mail* described Patel as 'the classic example of a self-made man, arriving in Britain with nothing and building up business through sheer hard work.'

VITAL CLUES MISSED

Police have made no arrests in either case. They say the two murders are not linked. But many people who live and work in the area, and who spoke to *Time Out* last week, insist they were. Some of these people may hold vital clues — yet Clackney CID had not interviewed any of them. *Time Out* gathered its information from casual chats with people in the Lower Clapton Road.

Several people told us that Hoondle's two killers may have been part of the same gang which struck earlier that day just yards from his shop — an incident that was not reported to police.

Terry Shah runs City News in Clarence Road, just around the corner from Hoondle's shop. He told *Time Out* how trouble flared at his newsagent's around 5pm on the day Hoondle was shot. Five youths pocketed goods and, when challenged, threatened to shoot shop assistants. With guns apparently concealed under their jackets, they shouted: 'You st mind your business or we'll blow your brains apart now.' As tempers flared, they screamed almost exactly the

same words that Hoondle would hear five hours later: 'Do you want your head shot off now?'

Unlike Hoondle, Shah let the men take what they wanted — which amounted to bacon and sausages. They fled without revealing their weapons. Like many other violent incidents at the shop, this one went unreported. Shah's brother, Jim, explains: 'We get people in here stealing food and threatening us with knives five or six times a week. But we never report them because by the time the police come we've dealt with them.'

Jay Singh runs the ND Video Centre next to Hoondle's now boarded up shop. He says Hoondle's killers 'behaved in exactly the same way in City News, picking up goods without paying and then threatening to shoot in the same way.'

Jim Shah says the incident was not reported because 'the police have let us down time and time again by not answering emergency calls on time'. Singh says that if police had known about the earlier incident, they would have been patrolling the area and Hoondle would be alive today. 'The police could have prevented it. It should never have happened.'

Local confidence in the police force is rock bottom in the half-mile strip of Lower Clapton Road, an area where drug addicts and pushers operate openly. Many people say there has been 'a complete breakdown in policing', which encourages criminals. Muggings are rife, even in broad daylight.

One shop assistant, who refused to give his name, says, 'The police don't patrol. They're scared themselves. Everyone's scared round here.'

One shopkeeper's story illustrates just how bad the situation is. 'A great big black guy of about 6'4" and 16 stone came into our shop and put cheese and bacon into his pockets. As he was leaving we stopped him and asked him to put what he took on the counter. He got really angry and pulled out a bloody great knife and kicked my brother in the groin.

'Police nicked the guy. They said I could press charges but it would only mean a lot more hassle for me from other blacks. They said they couldn't provide assistance for me, so I forgot it.'

Time Out asked Hackney police for permission to spend a day with them as they worked on the murder inquiries. This was not possible, because 'the police don't work like that, going out every day on the cases.'

A spokeswoman said: 'The police refute absolutely there has been a breakdown in policing. There are daily patrols in the Lower Clapton Road.'

And she denied the police were slow to answer emergency calls. 'They get there as soon as they humanly can.' She initially said police got to Hoondle and Patel 'almost immediately', but later admitted she could not say exactly how long it took.

Christina Kent

TIME OUT
1-8-90

The mothers of three black youths who claim they were beaten up and racially abused by Hackney police spoke out last week against their sons' treatment.

The three boys – all aged between 13 and 14 – were chased across Hackney Marshes on July 8, after police were called out over a stone-throwing incident. One ended up needing six hours' observation in Homerton Hospital after allegedly being beaten around the head with police truncheons.

'It's outrageous. The police's attitude is, if we don't keep our kids indoors, they've got a right to do what they like to them,' one of the parents, Mrs Johnson, told *CL*. 'Is this what they mean by improving police-community relations?'

No charges have been made against the youths, but the families – in conjunction with Hackney Community Defence Association – are suing the police for damages. JUDY HIRST



CL 2.8.90

Anti-poll tax group claim court victory

ANTI poll tax protesters are claiming victory in the latest round of the legal battle following the bloody demonstrations at Hackney Town Hall in March, and Trafalgar Square in June.

Both demonstrations were officially classed as riots after hundreds-of-thousands-of-pounds worth of damage caused by campaigners who smashed windows, looted shops and burned cars and buildings.

Police went in hard and fast to stop the violence, but innocent protesters were caught up with the trouble-makers and charged with offences ranging from violent disorder to theft.

According to local police watchdog

group, the Hackney Community Defence Association, 31 people went to them for help after being arrested at the Town Hall demo.

Of 24 cases to come to court so far, only 10 have been found guilty, one was bound over to keep the peace and 13 were found not guilty.

Chas Loft, 25, of Northfield Road, Stamford Hill, was one of those cleared by the courts after being charged with affray.

"I was knocked over during the surge of the crowd, grabbed by two policemen, and arrested for affray," he said.

"It's a big relief to be cleared, but

I've had four months of worry that I might be sent to prison. I'm very grateful for HICDA's support, who photographed my arrest and made it possible for me to clear my name."

In June, police arrested 11 people after raids on flats and houses in Stamford Hill and Dalston, following the poll tax riot at Trafalgar Square.

A spokesman for Stamford Hill Anti-Poll Tax Union said: "Four people were charged with violent disorder and seven were released on police bail pending possible public order offences."

"Of the four charged with violent disorder, three have had their public

order charges dropped due to insufficient evidence.

A police spokesman said: "It is not unusual for a month to pass before charges are brought when you are dealing with 1,850 reported offences from the Trafalgar Square investigation."

"It is a fairly mammoth task.

"As far as we are concerned, five people have been charged with offences, four are on police bail which has been extended for one month and two have not been proceeded with."

"We are continuing to make arrests and continuing to charge people weeks after the event."



● Chas Loft - cleared of affray.

Murder hunt launched as gunshot victim dies

POLICE launched a murder hunt this week after the man gunned down in a Dalston drinking club died in Homerton Hospital.

Glen Lee Abdul was shot twice in the back and leg at point-blank range outside Maksim's Club in Kingland High Street a fortnight ago.

The 25-year-old victim, who lived

by RUSS LAWRENCE

on the Northwold Estate in Upper Clapton, was put under armed police guard after the shooting because of fears of another attempt being made on his life.

Murder squad detectives say he was shot after intervening in a fight between two men in the basement of the club in the early hours of Thursday, July 19.

The row spilled out onto the pavement outside the pub where police believe Mr Abdul may have been shot by mistake by the gunman.

"One theory is that because the club is dark the gunman couldn't see that well and picked on him thinking he was the man he had been having the original argument with," said the man leading the investigation, Det Supt John Probert.

Police have set up a special incident room and have taken statements from many of the 50 drinkers in the club at the time, but they are appealing to others who were there and have not been interviewed, to come forward.

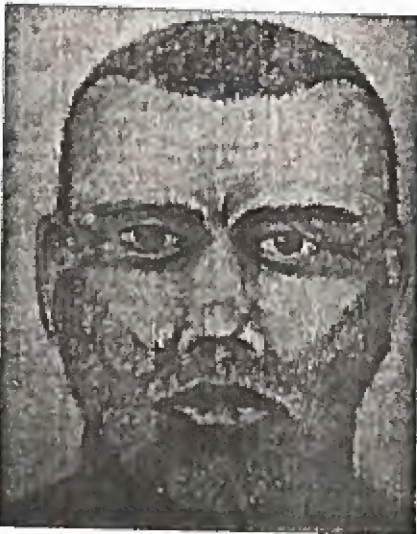
They also want to hear from people in Kingsland High Street who heard the two shots or saw the gunman running away in the direction of Stoke Newington at around 2.20am.

They have issued a description of the killer. He is described as black, 6ft tall, of medium build, in his mid-twenties with wet-look Afro-hair.

He was wearing a white shirt, a string vest, grey trousers and brown shoes.

Anyone with information should contact the Abdul incident room (tel: 488 7180).

Police chiefs plead for calm



● The latest police photo of a man sought in connection with the murder of Baldev Hoondle.

POLICE have issued a "cool it" plea to Asian shopkeepers who threatened to arm themselves with pistols and set up vigilante patrols after the murder of two traders in Lower Clapton.

Hackney's top cops had urgent meetings this week with community leaders to reassure them everything possible is being done to catch the murderers of Rajibhai Patel and Baldev Hoondle, both gunned down during recent robberies.

One shopkeeper revealed that just hours before Mr Hoondle was shot dead at the G and H Off Licence in Lower Clapton Road on July 22, a gang stormed into his newsagents and threatened to shoot him, too - but he didn't bother to report the attack to police.

Terry Shah, who runs City News in Clarence Road, said: "Five youths filled their pockets with goods, punched me in the stomach, and threatened to blow my head off if I moved."

"In the 11 years I've run this shop I've been stabbed seriously four times. I don't blame people wanting to protect themselves with guns. I'd do the same if it was legal."

Police met with representatives from the Stoke Newington-based North London Muslim Centre, the Hackney Asian Association, and the Jacob Benjamin Elias Synagogue in Stamford Hill.

Supt Tom Williamson, from Hackney police station, said: "Vigilante patrols are not the way forward, and will not be supported by community leaders."

"We have increased patrols in the Lower Clapton Road area, and the two murder inquiries are progressing well."

In the latest development in the Hoondle killing, detectives stopped and questioned more than 500 people at a road block in Lower Clapton Road last Sunday night, hoping to find someone who was driving past at the time of the shooting.

MG

3. 8. 90



Under arrest: Kate Millson

Poll tax battle hots up

Hackney anti-poll tax campaigners are claiming a legal victory in their battle to defend protesters. But in Wandsworth, the bailiffs are getting ready to move in. JUDY HIRST reports.

Two more of the protesters arrested on the March 8 anti-poll tax demonstration outside Hackney Town Hall have been acquitted. Chas Loft, a student from Stamford Hill, has been cleared of the charge of affray, which could have meant a three year prison sentence. And Kate Millson, an unemployment centre worker who was charged with assaulting a police officer - and with an offence under Section 4 of the Public Order Act - has had her name cleared.

Both demonstrators say that they received a lot of support from the Hackney Community Defence Association (HCDA), which has been handling 31 of the 57 cases of people arrested on March 8. The HCDA has made a document containing a detailed analysis of the Hackney demonstration available to *City Limits*: its conclusions are highly critical of the police, the local council, and the official organisers of the protest.

Between 4500-5000 people took part in the Hackney demonstration which, along with the one at Trafalgar Square, has been officially classed as a 'riot'. Fourteen out of the 26

cases that have come to court so far have been found not guilty; 10 have been found guilty, and two bound over to keep the peace.

The HCDA says that these results show that 'the police indiscriminately arrested' some protesters, and 'the important role defence campaigns play in challenging the state's criminalisation of protest.' According to the HCDA report, all but one of the 57 demonstrators arrested were local people - despite police and media claims to the contrary.

The Territorial Support Group is singled out in the report for displaying 'excessive police violence', and conducting random arrests. Hackney's Labour administration is also criticised for boarding up the town hall, and employing private security guards with dogs to patrol the building. And the Hackney branch of the All-Britain Anti-Poll Tax Federation is slated for providing no adequate stewarding or legal back-up for the protesters - and for 'refusing to stand side by side' with those arrested.

Kate Millson said last week that she was overjoyed at the result of her case, and is now contemplating legal action against the police for, amongst

other things, malicious prosecution and false imprisonment: 'I maintained all along that the police had produced the wrong arresting officer,' she told *CL*. 'They totally contradicted themselves all the way along.'

Three of the four people charged with violent disorder, following the police raid on the homes of anti-poll tax protesters in Stamford Hill and Dalston in June, have had the charges against them dropped due to insufficient evidence. A total of 11 people were arrested in 'Operation Carnaby', as the raid by at least 60 police officers was called. Two further raids have since taken place in the Stamford Hill area, resulting in two more people being arrested and charged with violent disorder.

Nearly 200 people in Wandsworth have received bailiffs' letters, after failing to pay their poll tax. The letters have been sent out by Madagans, a large firm of bailiffs that specialises in work for local authorities. Local anti-poll tax campaigners are considering various forms of defence - including invoking the ancient 'Statute of Marlborough (1267)' - to stop the bailiffs seizing poll tax debtors' belongings.

Islington Council is targetting local celebrities on its poll tax hit list. Islington North MP, Jeremy Corbyn, the borough's mayor, and a number of local councillors are among those who can expect to be hauled before the courts this Autumn for being refuseniks. The council admits that local notables refusing to pay encourages many more to defy the law: by targetting them, the council intends to get across its message that it is serious about collecting the tax.

CL 9.8.90

Report says police must share blame for poll tax riot

VIOLENCE and rioting at the Hackney poll tax riot in March was the fault of both heavy-handed policing and the organisers of the demonstration, a new report has revealed.

Police watchdog, the Hackney Community Defence Association (HCDA), has published its own investigation into the riot, which caused hundreds of thousands of pounds of damage when demonstrators went on the rampage.

The demonstration - aimed at councillors who were meeting at Hackney Town Hall in Mare Street to set the poll tax at £499 - turned from a good-natured rally into a night of violence between police and protesters.

Fifty-seven people were arrested for offences ranging from theft and criminal damage to grievous bodily harm and affray.

by STEWART FOWLER

Despite claims at the time that many of those arrested were political agitators from outside the borough who intentionally inflamed the crowd, HCDA found that only one of those arrested had an address outside Hackney.

On the causes of the violence, the report says: "Until 8.15pm the police, with some notable exceptions, showed restraint in dealing with the demonstration."

"They were subjected to a high level of abuse, both verbal and physical."

But it goes on to add: "Excessive police violence commenced with the deployment of the Tactical Support Group. From then onwards skirmishing took place in the area of the Town Hall, largely as a result of police brutality and aggressiveness."

But it's not just the police who come in for criticism in the report - demonstra-

tors high on drink and drugs are also blamed for their part in stirring up the crowds.

And the organisers of the protest, Hackney Against the Poll Tax Federation (HAPTIF), are blasted for inadequate preparations.

The report says: "The HAPTIF did not have any stewards at the demonstration who might have controlled the situation at the outset, or help people who might get caught up in any violence... nor did they prepare any contingency plans in readiness for confrontation between police and demonstrators."

"They failed even to have solicitors on call."

No-one was available from HAPTIF for comment on the claims.

A Hackney police spokesman, Supt Tom Williamson, said: "We are unaware of the existence of this report."

Cash reward by dead man's family

Police show hats clue to shopkeeper's killers

DETECTIVES hunting for the murderers of Lower Clapton trader Balder Hoonde are desperate to trace anyone who owns a hat like the two pictured left.

The first hat - a trendy "pillbox" made of beige suede with a multi-coloured patterned top - was found next to the body of Mr Hoonde

after he was shot in the head at point-blank range at his off-licence in Lower Clapton Road.

Elimination

One of the two raiders dropped the other hat in nearby Clarence Road as they fled from the shop empty-handed, making their escape along Downs Road before disappearing.

It is an expensive black and white British Knights designer-baseball cap, and it's hard to come by.

Det Supt Harry Wilkins, leading the investigation from a special "murder suite" of offices at Arbour Square police station in Stepney, said: "It is a process of elimination."

"We have been in touch with the distributors, and tracked down most of the outlets selling these caps, but we want people to come forward who either own one themselves or have seen someone else wearing

one." The murder, just weeks after sub-postmaster Raghobhai Patel was also gunned down at his shop in Lower Clapton Road, sparked outrage among the Asian community.

Mindless criminals

And this week, Lloyd King, chair of Hackney Council for Racial Equality, said: "We call on the police to do everything possible within the law to bring the mindless criminals to justice and to reassure the Asian community in East London that they will be protected."

A reward of £500 has been put up by the family and friends of Mr Hoonde for information leading to the conviction of his murderer. Anyone with information should contact the incident room on 071-488 6595.

Racial motive to attack

POLICE believe an attack on a 40-year-old Jewish man in Stoke Newington last Thursday was racially motivated.

The victim was beckoned over and asked directions by one of two white men sitting in a red car parked in Cazenove Road, Stoke Newington.

When the victim leaned in to help he was sprayed in the face with a noxious spray before the pair drove off towards Stamford Hill.

The man suffered only slight injuries and did not need treatment.



Wall of silence over shots outside pub

THE Trail of Blood Mystery sounds like the title of an Agatha Christie whodunnit, but it has Stoke Newington's real-life detectives baffled.

Four gun shots rang out in Shacklewell Lane, Dalston, on Sunday night, but when police arrived there was nothing left but a trail of blood.

Detectives followed the spots of blood from just outside the Green Man pub to nearby Arcola Street where they simply disappeared.

Although there were several people outside the pub, nobody could throw any light on who fired the shots or say where the blood came from. Det Insp Roger Williams is baffled. He said: "There are only a few spots of blood and we have reports of at least four gunshots, but we haven't identified a victim or assailant yet."

"The blood could be the result of the shots fired, but we can't even be sure of that. It's not the only way blood could have been drawn."

There is no suggestion that the pub had anything to do with the incident, he added, also ruling out any suggestion of a link with the murder of Glen Lee Abdul outside Mak-sim's night club in nearby Kingsland High Street last month.

Det Insp Williams, who is leading the investigation, added: "Anyone who wants to talk to me on the phone or at the station about this will be treated in the strictest confidence." Phone him on 071 488 7278.



Dopey Chester snoozes on duty!

SHOPPERS couldn't believe their eyes when these two mounted policemen began chasing a suspected thief through the packed crowds at Ridley Road market, Dalston - and then galloped straight into the indoor shopping centre of Dalston Cross.

But amazement turned to tears when, hooves clattering on the polished floor, 18-year-old police horse Chester slipped and fell. After scrabbling about trying to get up, he gave one last snort and a whinny, and lay absolutely still.

Onlookers thought the poor beast had dropped dead from a heart attack, or at the very least broken his leg and would have to be put down. And when his rider, Pc Richard Jervis, began prodding the horse sharply in the ribs he nearly provoked a riot among the animal lovers.

But Chester was far from dead. After working up a sweat chasing a thief in the heat of the Wednesday afternoon sun, he had

simply had enough of tough police work and fancied forty winks!

And where better to take a nap than on a cool floor in the roomy, air-conditioned, indoor shopping centre? Chester simply curled up and fell fast asleep. "He was more than happy just lying there snoozing," said Pc Jervis, who is based at Bow police station. "He's a bit of a character, and he's often fallen asleep on his feet and then fallen over!"

"With hindsight, I suppose we should have both dismounted before we went indoors. But the automatic doors opened, and in we went!" Like the mounties, these coppers always get their man. And the petty thief they chased and caught turned out to be wanted for serious firearms offences.

Dopey Chester, a veteran of the Wapping and Trafalgar Square riots, suffered only a small cut in his tail, and was back on duty the same day after a visit from the vet and a bag full of apples.

Petrol bombs 'made by kids'

POLICE who stumbled upon a cache of petrol bombs believe they were made by a group of kids preparing for a gang fight.

The bombs were found in the stairwell of a block of flats in Crepley Street, Hoxton, on Tuesday last week.

The discovery comes after weeks of tension between rival gangs in the area, and police are convinced they were made by the youngsters.

But they insist there is no danger of gang warfare exploding and are certain the bombs would never actually have been used in a fight.

Det Sgt Paul Phillips of City Road police said: "We are currently investigating claims that local gangs are in dispute."

"But we are not taking it all that seriously because we don't think anything would have come of it. We don't believe the bombs would have been used."

HQ 10.8.90



● PC Christopher Green



● PC Bernard Webb

Award-winning cops

A POLICE officer who was shot trying to stop bank robbers from escaping with half-a-million pounds in a hi-jacked security van has received a bravery award from the East End's top cop.

The ruthless shotgun bandits blasted PC Christopher Green in the leg when he blocked their getaway with his patrol car.

His heroic actions foiled the robbery and all the cash was recovered.

He and his wireless operator, PC Bernard Webb, who was also shot at, both received commendations from Deputy Assistant Commissioner Michael Taylor.

They were among four Hackney cops honoured for their courage at a special presentation ceremony.

PC Green, aged 26, was shot shortly after security guards were ambushed collecting cash from the Newington Green branch of Barclays Bank two years ago.

He and PC Webb, aged 27, responded to a call over the radio and spotted the four-man gang unloading the cash in a secluded alleyway nearby in

Albion Road, Stoke Newington.

They parked their police car across the entrance trapping the gang, who abandoned the cash and opened fire, wounding PC Green.

Although the money was recovered, the gang escaped in a waiting getaway car and were never caught.

Both officers were based at City Road police station at the time but PC Green has moved to Hackney.

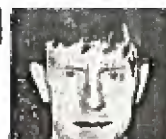
Presenting them with their citations, DAC Michael Taylor said: "They ignored the danger to themselves and showed courage and tenacity."

Also receiving citations at the special ceremony were two officers from Stoke Newington who risked their lives to arrest two gem thieves armed with a knife.

The two men had robbed a jeweller's shop in Kingsland High Street, Dalston, in May last year.

They threatened the jeweller with a kitchen knife and stole rings, diamonds and cash.

But PC Michael Black, aged 32, and PC John Conlon, 23, were alerted by a passer-by and they gave chase capturing the robbers after a violent struggle.



● PC John Conlon



● PC Michael Black

Drug dealers hit by police crackdown

POLICE have chalked up amazing success in tackling drug dealers and muggers, after a crackdown on the sort of crimes that worry Hackney residents the most.

The borough's bobbies arrested 96 drug dealers in 1989, the latest year for which figures are available.

That's an astounding 48-per-cent more arrests than the previous year, when 65 dealers were caught, and more than four times the 1986 figure, when just 22 were taken off the streets.

It's the most successful year ever in the war against the dealers, who peddle everything from cannabis to crack, and is a result of a concerted campaign to tackle the problem.

When tensions on the Haggerston Estate complained to police, the council block was targeted for a special operation and seven dealers were arrested in February.

But it's not just against drugs that police have celebrated success. Their latest annual report reveals that since 1986 the numbers of muggings have dropped dramatically from 1,040 to 709 last year. Yet arrests went up from 47 to 70.

Detectives believe that there are only a few active robbers responsible for the vast majority of muggings in the area, and just a few arrests can dramatically decrease the number of street robberies each year.

This is a difficult crime to clear up, since muggings are largely opportunistic and leave

Crime clear-up rate is a success story

by STEWART FOWLER

few clues. Yet it is the kind of offence that spreads fear, with women, in particular, afraid to walk out at night alone.

After last year's success story, Hackney's police have drawn up a new set of guidelines - but still have drug dealers and muggers firmly in their sights at the top of the list.

Abusive behaviour

But as well as those two groups, priorities for 1990 will include targeting burglars, cracking down on fights and abusive behaviour on the streets, improving road safety, and encouraging the victims of any racially-motivated incident to report it to police.

Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill, from Hackney police station, said: "I am optimistic that the excellent results achieved during 1989 will be continued into 1990 and we will also be, as ever, concentrating our efforts on the crimes which are of concern to the public in Hackney."

Police dismiss council pamphlet

HACKNEY'S top cops say there's been a "dramatic change of heart" at the Town Hall, and that a critical new council guide to the borough's police will not tempt them into a war of words.

The relationship between Hackney Council and the police has been extremely frosty in the past, but both sides say they are "on the eve of a breakthrough" in their relationship.

A new booklet written by the council's police unit threatens to stir things up again. One thousand copies of "Hackney's Police: A User's Guide" have been distributed free to libraries and information bureaux, and the book contains sniping references to the boys in blue.

The glossy pamphlet aims to tell members of the public how Hackney's police force is organised, and who they should get in touch with when they have a problem.

But much of the information comes from a study that is eight years out of date, and mixes what police call "politically flavoured" comment with fact.

The booklet says: "While tip-service is paid to the value of foot patrol, in practice they remain at the bottom of police priorities in terms of resources," and that "patrolling by car has, some believe, led to the virtual breakdown of the unit beat system."

It adds: "There are only five Crime Prevention Officers for the whole borough. This must raise doubts about how seriously the police take the issue," and also says that police do not take domestic violence seriously enough.

Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill, from Hackney police station, said: "Many of these matters are not accurate in terms of police priorities and are not borne out by the evidence."

And commenting on the use of an out-of-date study, Chief Supt Peter Twist, of Stoke Newington police station, added: "It is a measure of the success we have achieved

New relationship means knocking copy is a thing of the past they say

by STEWART FOWLER

in this borough that they have had to search back so many years to find something critical to say."

Hackney Council say it was meant to be a "warts and all" guide, and that it was never their intention to cause offence.

Common myth

Council leader John McCallery said: "It's a common myth that local authorities like Hackney won't have anything to do with the police."

"But it's just not true. We are committed to working closely with the police at all levels to develop joint initiatives to combat Hackney's high burglary rate, racial harassment, crimes of violence - particularly against women - and abuse of hard drugs."

Police and protesters refute report on the night the poll tax demo turned into a riot

POLICE and protesters have hit back at the claim that they should share the blame for the anti-poll tax riot that broke out at Hackney Town Hall in March.

A report by police watchdog the Hackney Community Defence Association said the night of violence and looting was the fault of both heavy-handed policing and poor preparations by the organisers, Hackney Against The Poll Tax Federation.

Hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of damage was caused when demonstrators went on the rampage as the demonstration - aimed at councillors who were setting Hackney's £499 poll tax - turned from a good-natured rally into a full-scale riot.

In their report, HICDA singled out the police Tactical Support Group for "excessive violence, brutality and aggressiveness."

And HAPTF were blamed because "they did not have any stewards who might have controlled the situation at the outset or help people who got caught up in the violence," - "they failed even to have solicitors on call" and "failed to stand by these persons arrested."

But Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill, who was in charge of the police operation that evening, said: "I haven't seen a copy of this re-

'We were not to blame'

by STEWART FOWLER

port, but I refuse any suggestion that the police acted in other than a highly professional way.

"They showed forbearance and discipline in the face of physical and verbal abuse over a long period. I am proud of the restraint and initiative shown by the officers on duty that evening."

Fifty-seven demonstrators were arrested for offences ranging from theft and criminal damage to serious bodily harm and affray.

Brian Debus, for Hackney Against the Poll Tax Federation, said: "With our slender resources we couldn't have prevented the violence and rioting that took place."

"It took Hackney Community Defence Association five months to prepare this report, but we had only two weeks to organise what was probably the largest lobby ever at Hack-

ney Town Hall. After the event we placed two separate adverts in the Gazette appealing for witnesses to anyone arrested and federation members have been actively involved in lobbies at several courts and prisons. We also publicised the cases of several of those arrested."

"We intend to continue organising the largest ever civil disobedience campaign this country has seen until the poll tax is nothing more than a bad memory."

Murdered shopkeeper's family back in business

JUST weeks after shopkeeper Baldev Hoondle was gunned down at his off licence in Lower Clapton, his defiant son has opened up the shop for business again - saying it's what his father would have wanted.

Hardeep Hoondle, 20, is back at work behind the counter of the Galt Off Licence in Lower Clapton Road, where only last month he watched in horror as his father was shot through the head by two would-be robbers.

Police still have not caught the cold-blooded killers, but the thought that they could be Hackney's next customers doesn't bother him. With his father dead, it is his responsibility as the eldest son to feed and clothe his bereaved family.

"It's what my father would have wanted, and I certainly have no plan to move from Hackney, despite what happened," he said.

Speaking publicly for the first time about the callous murderers, brave Hardeep added: "I think they should be put inside prison for life for what they've done to me and my family. They've taken someone's life, and once they're caught they should stay in prison until they die."

The murder sparked uproar among the frightened Asian community, and police moved fast to cool down emotions after scared shopkeepers threatened to arm themselves with guns for protection.

Now police have set up a Shopwatch anti-crime scheme specifically for the 34 traders in the Lower Clapton Road, after it was revealed that one shopkeeper waited over 25 minutes for help to arrive after making a 999 call.

Traders have been given a free hotline number which connects them instantly to a squad at Hackney police station in the event of trouble.

And they've agreed to take part in a "Car-cade" scheme. If someone comes into their shop using stolen credit cards or on a stealing spree, they phone at least two other shops in the same road to warn them. They, in turn, each phone another two shops, until everyone is aware of the problem.

Crime Prevention Officer Peter Habbithaw said: "This is an early warning system, and we are confident it will cut down on crime in the area."



● The latest police photofit picture of one of two men wanted in connection with the murder of Baldev Hoondle.



Gary Stretch.

Suspended police got £250,000 wages

SEVEN policemen have been paid £250,000 in wages while suspended from duty for three years accused of beating up a man in a Hackney pub.

The seven officers from City Road police station are accused of beating up Gary Stretch outside the Limes Pub, in Hackney Road, in November 1987.

Now a police expert has slammed the procedures which leave the Stretch case unsolved almost three years after the incident.

Brian Hilliard, editor of the police industry magazine, *The Police Review*, put the delays down to "gross inefficiency" and called for an overhaul of the way people can complain about the police.

"This is an immense amount of time," said Mr Hilliard. "The Police Complaints Authority would like complaints to be dealt with

by MARTIN TALBOT

within six months, but that is often not possible.

"But three years is simply gross inefficiency. It also adds to the feeling of mistrust many members of the public have for the complaints mechanism," he said.

The estimated total of £250,000 in salary paid out to the officers is calculated from their average salary, he said, although it could be higher with special allowances on top.

The officers have been suspended since the incident and when their disciplinary hearing came up in April they forced a judicial review, claiming it was too long since the incident for them to be disciplined.

Now Mr Stretch is awaiting a date for the judicial review which could finally allow the dis-

ciplinary hearing to go ahead and bring an end to his misery.

Gary Stretch's solicitor, Raju Bait, condemned the lengthy delays, but added: "Even if the delays were sorted out we still would not have an acceptable system - the delays are simply a symptom of a greater rot within the system."

"That rot arises from the fact that police officers investigate themselves. Until we have an independent investigation of complaints against police officers there will be no confidence in the system."

A Scotland Yard spokesperson could not confirm the £250,000 figure. "There are sometimes problems in getting the evidence to compile a case fully," he said. "But the problems involved in this case have been exceptional."

The Police Complaints Authority was not available for comment.

Call for crackdown on vice girl menace

Vice girls crackdown success

VICE girls in the borough could be feeling a bit shortchanged after Stoke Newington police celebrated one of their most successful years ever in the crackdown on prostitution.

Police arrested a record number of women for soliciting offences in 1989, according to the latest figures available and just published in the annual report of Stoke Newington police station.

More than 650 prostitutes were arrested compared to 225 the year before, and another 449 were cautioned.

And their clients didn't get away scot-free either - 60 received summonses, and 161 were sent letters to their homes warning that kerb-crawling is against the law.

But it's not only the vice squad who had a good year. Arrests for all categories of crime were up 46 per cent and the number of crimes solved was 36 per cent more than last year.

There was one sour note though - only one in five offences was cleared up.

TOUGH new laws and stiffer penalties to drive prostitutes off the streets are being demanded by Hackney's police watchdog group after floods of complaints from local residents.

A plea for something to be done to tackle the vice problem in Stamford Hill's red-light district was made again at the meeting of Hackney's Police Community Consultative Group last Thursday night.

It follows repeated deputations from tenants' associations and concerned residents who live in or around the Amhurst Park area.

They have formed themselves into the Amhurst Park Action Group representing flatblocks at Amhurst Court, Cambridge Court, Goodridge House, Joseph Court, Park Lea Court and Samuel Lewis Trust buildings as well as homes in Bergholt Crescent, Hillside Road, Hurstdene Gardens and Northdene Gardens.

Stoke Newington's top cop, Chief Supt Peter Twist, has already met with the pressure group and a further meeting to look at ways to combat the problem will be held on September 3 when local councillors and other officials will attend.

"I have deployed extra officers during these hot summer evenings when prostitution is rife," he told the police consultative group.

"We do attach a great sense of priority to this vexatious problem. I have sent out a record number of letters to kerb crawlers, but it's an intractable problem and for every prostitute arrested another takes their place."

The sex-for-sale trade had also brought the associated problem of drug dealing, said Maurice Owen of the North London Council of Christians and Jews.

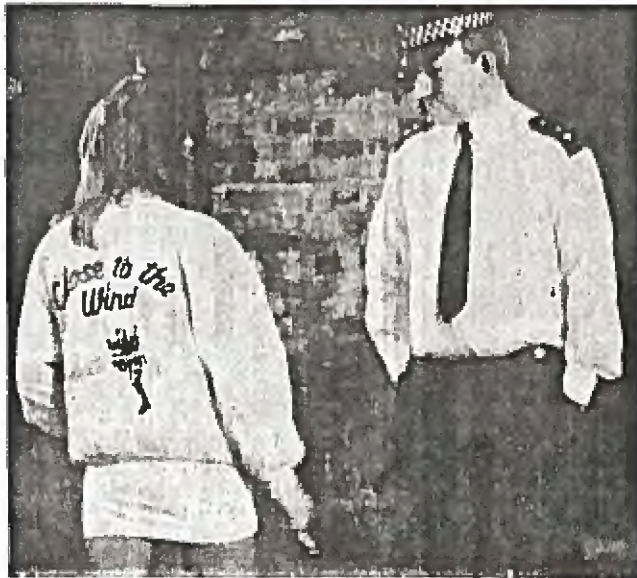
He warned that many people who had lived in the area for years were now moving out of the borough.

Tory councillor, Joe Lobenstein, said what was needed was new legislation to give the police more powers to deal with the problem and tougher, more punitive action from the courts.

"The police have no real powers," he said. "They bring a prostitute to the magistrates' court where they are fined £25, which for them is a business expense, then they are back on the streets the following evening to get money to pay off the fine."

He suggested the group should approach the Home Secretary and the borough's MPs to get parliament to change the laws.

"Tougher laws like allowing police



Police question a girl in the red light district of Stamford Hill.

to keep a prostitute in custody all night should be introduced," he added, "and magistrates should be given wider scope to impose larger fines or other punishments."

Chief Supt Peter Twist agreed that the courts were largely ineffective in their sentencing of prostitutes, but said what was needed was a multi-agency approach to the problem.

HG 24.8.90

Council and police relationship is vital

I WAS amazed to read the Gazette's story about the council's new practical guide to the local police and council services.

The report was highly misleading in its portrayal of both the purpose and content of the publication. The purpose of the guide is to outline, as a public service, what the police and the council respectively do and do not do on policing and crime prevention issues.

The booklet consists of 36 pages closely packed with useful information and phone numbers with practical steps to follow when dealing with racial harassment, domestic violence, and other problems such as obscene phone calls, noisy neighbours and traffic.

In doing this, the council is clarifying a genuine confusion about which agency to approach with which problem. Your report portrayed this handy reference booklet as a retrogressive step in council/police relations. Nothing could be further from the truth; the book does highlight areas of concern, as any good consumer guide would, but this is a far cry from "sniping references".

Where concerns were voiced, this was based on the views of Hackney residents at our round-the-borough meetings on policing and crime prevention, and major police-sponsored research backed up by the police's own Woolf-Ollins report of 1988.

To take just one example, your report suggests that we say local police do not take domestic violence seriously. In fact, representatives of the council have visited and been very impressed by the facilities available locally. We have liaised frequently with the police's excellent domestic violence officers.

It is vital for local people that the council and police achieve a constructive working relationship. Certainly, local people have seen the value of the booklet, and following its initial distribution there have been requests for hundreds of copies. — CLLR JOHN McCafferty, LEADER OF HACKNEY COUNCIL.

Anti-police attitude was no myth

CLLR John McCafferty, the leader of Hackney Council, is reported to have said (Gazette, August 17) that "it is a common myth that local authorities like Hackney won't have anything to do with the police. But it's just not true..."

A myth? Surely CLlr McCafferty remembers the positive anti-police campaign which his party generated when it established a police committee in 1982? Let me remind him that at the first meeting of that committee, a member of his own party asked whether the police commander had been invited to attend, whereupon the then chairman said that if the commander wants to attend, he can sit in the public gallery.

CLlr McCafferty may also remember the instructions which went out to council staff that they may have no contact with the police unless they have the consent of a chief officer or a committee chairman.

And the Colin Roach saga?

I am glad that John is now planning to generate a new and positive policy towards the police, and trust that he will carry his party with him in an effort to fight the high crime level and promote law and order in the borough. — CLLR JOE LOBENSTEIN, LEADER, CONSERVATIVE OPPOSITION GROUP, HACKNEY COUNCIL.

Aim is to re-open Carl Bridgewater case

Murder sentence man's wife in bike marathon bid

by STEWART FOWLER

THE DEVOTED wife of a man convicted for the murder of teenage newspaper boy Carl Bridgewater in 1978 is to cycle 300 miles to draw attention to her claims that he is innocent.

Theresa Robinson, 37, of Farleigh Road, Stoke Newington, was working as a solicitor's clerk when she met and fell in love with her future husband, Jim.

Convinced of his innocence, they married behind bars two years ago at the top security prison of Gantree in Leicestershire.

Controversy has long surrounded the murder case, which involved the cold-blooded shooting of youngster Carl Bridgewater when he interrupted a burglary while delivering newspapers at Yew Tree Farm in Staffordshire.

All four defendants — Jim Robinson, Vincent and Michael Hickey, and Pat Molloy — protested their innocence, but were found guilty of the killing. The Court of Appeal, in the longest appeal in British criminal history, upheld the convictions.

Now Theresa and her friend, Ann Whelan, the mother of Michael Hickey, are going to cycle to each prison where the defendants are held as part of their campaign to demand an independent public inquiry into the convictions.

They are also demanding an

investigation into all cases involving the West Midlands Serious Crimes Squad, which was disbanded last year after allegations of corruption, and who originally quizzed the four men over the murder.

"It's important to keep this case in the public eye," said Theresa. "We want to see these convictions quashed, and we have new evidence we will be presenting to the Home Office next month."

"Just imagine how Jim feels after 12 long years in prison, knowing he is innocent."

"He has had a very difficult time — when he first arrived, razor blades were left in his cell as a message for him to commit suicide."

"Now, he is treated well by warders and prisoners alike, who believe that he was not responsible for the murder."

When the two women eventually arrive back in London, they will take a letter to the Home Secretary, David Waddington, detailing their new appeal.

They say that a signed confession to the killing by co-defendant Pat Molloy, who died in prison, was mostly fabricated.

An expert on speech patterns will give evidence that the majority of the confession — which Mr Molloy later retracted — was dictated to him by someone else, and is not in his own words.



● Devoted wife Theresa Robinson — planning bike marathon..

Teenage steaming gang in triple attack

A TEENAGE steaming gang in Stamford Hill attacked three different victims within the space of an hour last Friday night.

The gang of about 20 male and female youngsters aged 14 to 16 terrorised passers-by, kicking and thumping them before stealing valuables.

In the first attack a 22-year-old wo-

man, from the Stamford Hill Estate, was robbed of her watch near the Pizza Hut in Stamford Hill Broadway at 10.30pm.

Then a 30-year-old woman who got off a bus near Northfield Road was attacked and kicked to the ground after she refused to let go of her handbag.

The gang then jumped on a bus and attacked a 53-year-old man before robbing

him of a packet of cigarettes and his bus pass. Police believe the gang had spilled out from a nearby community centre.

Det Con Steve Bainbridge of Stoke Newington police said: "These were very nasty attacks."

"Anyone who saw anything in relation to this groups of youths should contact me at the CID on 488 7271."

Have-a-go policeman felled by muggers

A RETIRED policeman from Mauritius ended up with head injuries when he tackled a pair of robbers who tried to mug his friend, in Gillett Street, Dalston, on Saturday.

The ex-bobby, 68, who is staying temporarily in London, chased the pair after they tried

to rip the gold chain from the neck of his 42-year-old female friend from Bedfordshire at about 4.30pm.

But he had to be taken to Homerton Hospital after the robbers grabbed a piece of wood and hit him around the head.

Arrests at right-wing election meeting

SIX men were arrested as mounted police broke up scuffles between rival groups at a by-election meeting called by the right-wing British National Party.

Fights started as a cordon of police marched 150 supporters of the BNP past 100 rival anti-racist demonstrators outside Weavers Field School, Weavers Field, Bethnal Green, on Wednesday evening.

A British Telecom engin-

eer from Bethnal Green was the only local man arrested. He was charged with threatening language.

A 21-year-old building worker from Sunderland was also charged with threatening language. Others arrested gave addresses in Hillingdon, Kent and Peckham.

Next Thursday's by-election is due to the death of Tower Hamlets' Liberal leader Brenda Collins.

HG 24.8.90

Policeman shot dead after car warning

By Ian MacKinnon

UNARMED police who searched for the killer of a colleague shot dead minutes earlier were praised yesterday for "acting in the highest traditions of the service."

Within half an hour of the shooting in east London, 20 officers scouring the area arrested a man and took him to Hackney police station, where he was being questioned last night. Police revealed they were also investigating "other serious crimes."

Sir Peter Imbert, Metropolitan Police Commissioner, paid tribute to Constable Laurence Brown, 27, who had made the "ultimate sacrifice" in his devotion to duty.

The Police Federation deplored the "cold-blooded" killing and demanded that Parliament, when it reconvenes, discusses the reintroduction of the death penalty to deter the killers of police officers.

PC Brown, an officer for nine years, and his partner, PC Peter Townsend, were sent to Pownall Road to investigate reports of a man tampering with a parked car.

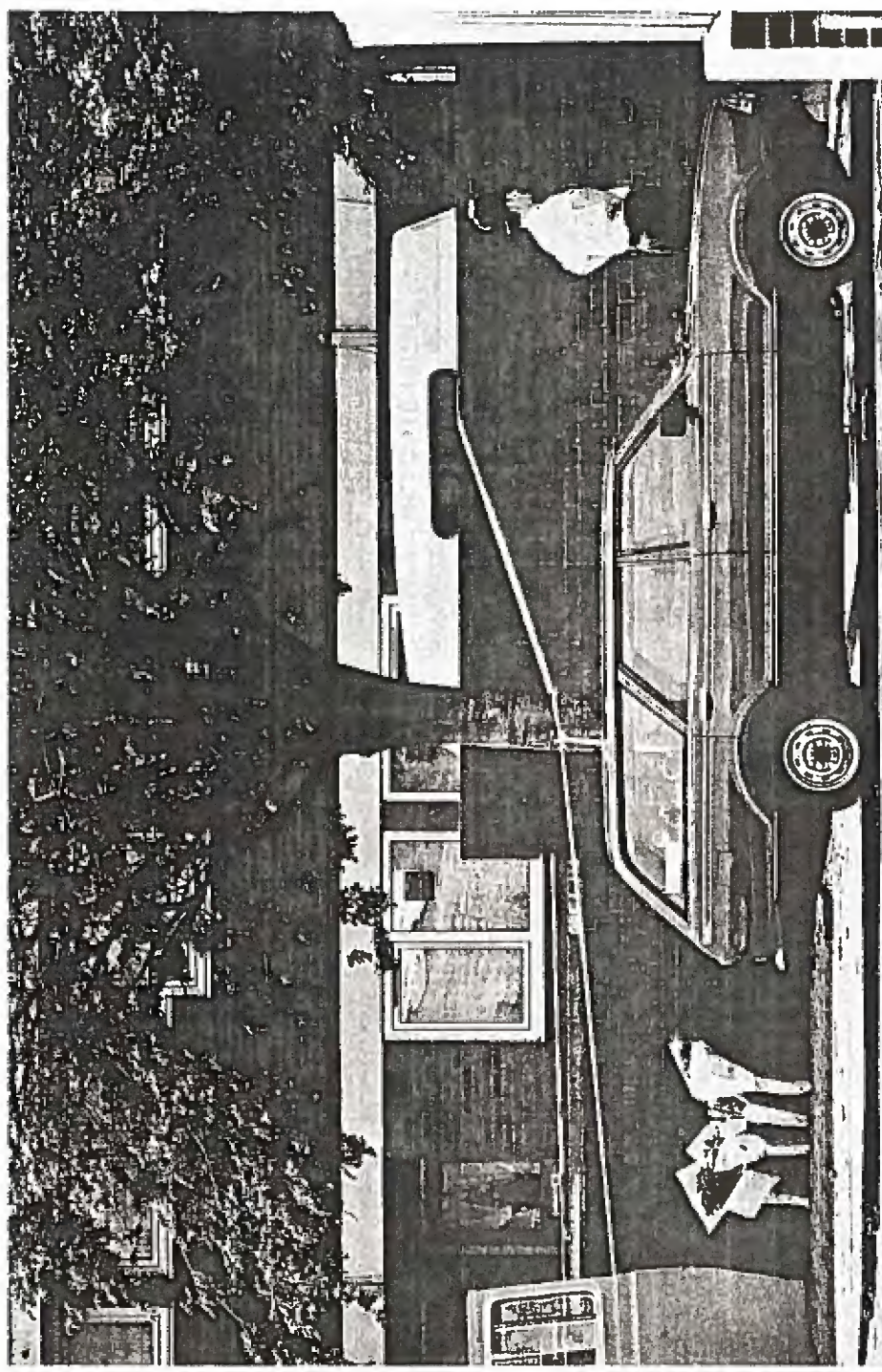
The pair sprang up to search the area. PC Brown came upon the man and challenged him. One resident, whose flat overlooks the scene, heard an argument and shouted plea: "No, don't do that."

At about 2.35am there was a shot and PC Brown, stationed at Hackney police station, was hit in the chest at point-blank range. He died in the ambulance on the way to hospital.

During the morning, police drivers searched the Regent's Canal near by, and found two sawn-off shotguns.

At a press conference, Sir Peter said: "From time to time police officers are called upon to make the ultimate sacrifice. Who could have imagined his reaction in the split-second of realisation that he was facing a gun. PC Laurence Brown died while carrying out his duty of service to the people of London."

"Knowing what had happened, his colleagues then had to go out unarmed to search for his mur-



Flowers marking the spot in Hackney, where PC Laurence Brown was shot dead after challenging a man suspected of tampering with a car. Photograph: Nicholas Turpin

Danger facing officers 'not growing'

By Steve Boggan

MORE THAN 19,000 police officers were attacked last year and 21 have died in stabbings, shootings and bombings since 1980.

A policeman's lot is a hazardous one, yet many other professions are statistically far more dangerous.

Figures prepared for *The Independent* by the Health and Safety Executive show that last year an average of two construction workers each week died in accidents, 90 per cent of which could have been avoided. In the energy and water supply industries, which include mining and oil exploration, the figure rises to more than four deaths a week.

In 1989, 697 people died from injuries sustained while they worked in construction, manufacturing, engineering, mining and service industries. Inevitably, the figures result in calls for more

from 6.9 in 1987/1988 to 45.3 in 1988/1989, a figure made artificially high by the Piper Alpha tragedy in which 167 men died.

Eight people, 25 per 100,000, lost their lives in mining, excluding coal. Nineteen, 18 per 100,000, coal extraction workers died. Seventeen workers, 13 per 100,000, died on the railways and 18 people, 6 per 100,000, in agriculture and horticulture.

By comparison, seven police officers died on duty last year out of a combined force in England and Wales of 126,000. Two of those deaths were a result of violence on the part of criminals.

In 1988, three died, two killed by criminals: in 1987, 11 died on duty, two having been killed unlawfully; in 1986 the figures were nine and zero respectively; in 1985 seven died, one killed by criminal violence, and in 1984 15 died, three

resulting from crimes. The worst toll for the police force in recent years came in 1982 when five out of 15 officers who died on duty were killed by criminals.

However, the Home Office insists policing is not, statistically, more dangerous than two decades ago. "In 1965, for example, 12 officers died on duty, two from criminal activities," a Home Office spokesman said.

"The average number of officers killed unlawfully each year seems to average about two, although there are fluctuations. Danger is danger — you can't say it is any more dangerous than 20 years ago."

"Training and equipment help ... to protect officers and, where an officer knows he is likely to be up against armed criminals, he can be armed. But there is no question of having a fully armed force."

The London Hazard Centre advises workers on safety and identifies the reasons why some jobs are more hazardous than others.

Hugh MacGrillen, the centre's safety adviser, said: "Construction, mining and oil exploration are by far the most dangerous jobs, simply because of the heavy plant and machinery involved."

"Other jobs, like fishing, are dangerous because of the physical aspect of the work involved, with heavy machinery in sometimes appalling conditions."

"Policing is particularly hazardous because of officers' contact with dangerous people rather than machinery. They would expect to encounter a high number of dangerous people and situations ... Paradoxically, the armed forces are relatively safe, but only in peace time and outside Northern Ireland."



PC Brown, 'ultimate sacrifice'

IND

29.8.90

GUNNED DOWN



He was a model policeman, a total professional. His loss is a tragedy.
- Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill

TO A BRAVE PC.
Who we never knew
gave his life in
THE MEANS OF HIS
DUTY.
MR. & MRS. ISHERWOOD
& FAMILY



Former mayor Betty Shanks, who has organised an appeal for Pc Brown's daughter, lays a floral tribute at the scene of the shooting. PICTURE: RAY COLLINS.

THIS simple, touching note tied to a wreath in memory of murdered Pc Laurence Brown echoes the feelings of every decent person in Hackney.

It marks the spot where the City Road copper was gunned down in the car park of Orwell Court in Pownall Road, Haggerston.

Now grieving tenants have set up a fund to care for his four-month-old daughter Emma who will grow up without ever knowing her father.

It's to show a shocked Britain that Hackney might be poor, violent, and crumbling - but it still has a heart of gold.



Pc Laurence Brown

Appeal organiser, former mayor Betty Shanks, said: "There is immense sorrow and grief that this tragedy happened here. We want that poor child and her widowed mother to know that we all care deeply, and will do everything we can to help in their hour of need."

Donations can be sent to: Emma Brown Appeal, Freepost N16 8BR.

Hackney's top cop, Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill, said: "Pc Brown was a model policeman, a total professional, and his loss is a tragedy."

A memorial service takes place today (Friday) at 12 noon outside Orwell Court.

THE KILLING FIELD - A FULL REPORT AND MORE PICTURES ARE ON PAGE 3.

Police break up hunger strike

POLICE broke-up a hunger strike by 35 of Hackney's Kurdish refugees protesting at the government's refusal to allow wives and children into the country.

The hunger strike outside the Home Office in Queen Anne's Gate, Kensington, ended last Friday after seven days of fasting.

Police said there were too many protesters outside the government buildings so the strike would have to stop.

The protesters fled to Hackney in May last year as a wave of 2,700 refugees escaping torture in south-eastern Turkey.

The Home Office refuses to give them political prisoner status. Instead they

have been given one year's leave to remain.

As political prisoners they would be entitled to bring their wives and children into the country. But that right, along with other privileges, is being denied.

Translator Esen Uslo who works at the Halkevi Centre, Stoke Newington Road, told the Gazette: "Police broke up the hunger strike because they said there were too many demonstrators there. But it reached its target in making the public aware of the situation."

"We will continue to pressure the Home Office to get the families brought here," he said.

HC 31-8-90

Reward doubled in postmaster killing

● Hackney Gazette, June 8.

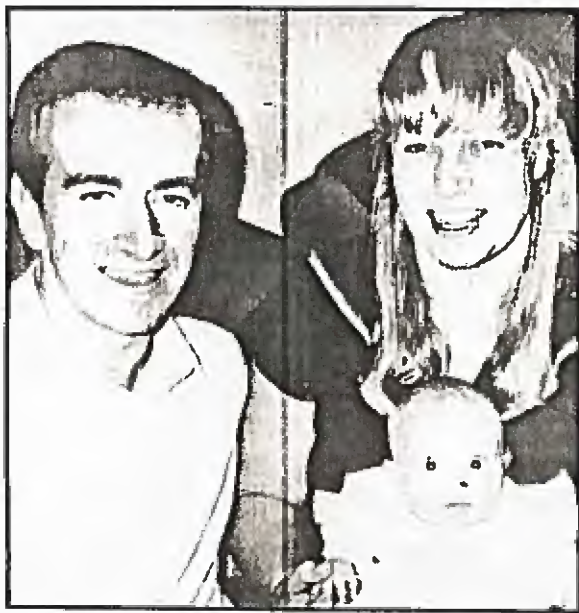
Widow's stabbing shocks neighbours

● Hackney Gazette, June 15.

STREETS OF FEAR

● Hackney Gazette, July 27.

Killing field



● Murdered Pc Laurence Brown with his wife Janet and four-month-old daughter Emma.

'Things will never be the same again'

FRIENDS and colleagues are united in their praise for the dedicated Pc, who is likely to be put forward for a posthumous bravery award.

Described as an "honest copper" by everyone who knew him, he had been a policeman at both City Road and Hackney police stations for nine years.

Known to everyone as Larry, his death has shocked the borough's hard-nosed cops. His devastated family - wife Janet, 27, and baby Emma, who was born just four months ago - are being comforted by officers from City Road.

Pc Jim Harding, who shared the same relief as the murdered man and was a close friend for many years, said: "We'll do all we can to help the family, by being there when they need us."

"Other policemen here are sickened by the shooting and deeply distressed. He was much loved and well thought of, and he had a lovely sense of humour."

Professionalism

"When something like this happens, it makes us all that little bit more wary of the people we are dealing with. Things will never be the same again without him."

Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill, of Hackney police station, also knew Pc Brown personally and paid tribute to his professionalism and courage.

"He was a model police officer, someone I was proud to have on my division," he said. "He was well known and highly popular at both police stations and his loss is a tragedy for us all."

"Ever-willing, capable and, above all, conscientious, he was an officer who always gave 100 per cent."

Tenants of Orwell Court have laid wreaths at the spot where he died and are mounting a night-time vigil by candlelight in his memory.

Sally Cliffe, 30, who lives just yards from where the constable was gunned down, said: "I cried when I heard about it, I was so upset. It's a dreadful thing to happen."

"Everyone here feels so terribly, terribly sorry for that poor man and his family - we'd like the wife and baby to know we have them in our hearts."

Pc Brown's murder is the fourth in Hackney since June

EVEN by Hackney's bloody standards, the murder of defenceless Pc Laurence Brown was beyond the pale.

But when the 27-year-old constable collapsed dying on the cold, concrete floor of a nondescript car park outside Orwell Court in Pownall Road, Haggerston, it was the fourth brutal killing in the borough in little more than two months.

Like the conscientious City Road copper, sub-post master Raojibhai Patel and off-licence owner Baldev Honsale were only doing their jobs when they were gunned down during a robbery.

And lonely widow Dorcen Vaux, 52, had nothing of value except her treasured engagement ring to offer the man who broke into her flat in Sycamore Court, on the giant Holly Street Estate, Dalston. He took it, of course, but it wasn't enough to stop him stabbing her to death.

Their killers are still at large, free to walk the streets or go to the pub, enjoying the same, simple pleasures they have denied their victims forever.

Someone must know who these men are. Violent death is a messy business, and someone must have been there when they came home covered in bloodstains.

But so far no-one in Hackney is telling, and the silence reinforces the fear that ordinary residents feel every single day. Many women, and particularly the elderly, are now frightened to go out alone in case they become yet another statistic in the borough's horrific roll call of crime.

The depraved rape last week of a frail 80-year-old pensioner in the stairwell of her Amhurst Park block of flats in Stamford Hill, shows that anyone can be a victim.

And a casual glance at any issue of the

GAZETTE NEWS
SPECIAL BY
STEWART FOWLER

Hackney Gazette brings a catalogue of armed robberies with guns and knives, vicious rapes of young girls and old women, fights involving broken bottles, and a lot more besides.

There is no doubt that violent crime is on the increase in the borough, but Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill, Hackney's top cop, said: "Inevitably, when there are a succession of serious crimes in a short period of time people are worried about public safety."

"I want to reassure them that their local police will continue to strive to make the streets of Hackney a safer place. It can at times be a very awkward place to police, but it is blessed with an abundance of sensible, level-headed police officers who do a superb job on behalf of the people who live here."



● Police officers gather at the scene of the murder. PICTURE: RAY COLLINS.

'I saw him die - he never stood a chance'

THE FIRST anyone knew of the tragic shooting of Pc Laurence Brown was when the loud blast of a sawn-off shotgun echoed round Orwell Court.

He was responding to a radio message that someone had been spotted trying to break into a car in the early hours of Tuesday morning.

He was shot in the chest at point-blank range with a sawn-off shotgun after splitting up from colleagues Pc Peter Townsend and Wpc Fiona McDonald to search the area.

Jean Troy, 60, lives just feet from where Pc Brown collapsed in a pool of blood. She had been sitting in a chair reading because she couldn't get to sleep that night, and the noise of the gun made her run to the front door. "I saw that poor boy die, and I shall never forget his face," she said.

"I ran out with a pillow as he lay there because I couldn't bear to see his head on the cold stone floor. His two colleagues were in tears as they tried to stop the bleeding and feel for a pulse. He was barely alive and couldn't speak, but they kept repeating



'Larry, Larry' over and over to him.

"He never stood a chance. I stood there feeling absolutely helpless, thinking what kind of animal can do that to somebody?"

Police reinforcements flooded into the area and detained a man nearby without a struggle. Two shotguns were later fished from the Grand Union Canal by a police underwater search team.

Police back call for capital punishment

HANGING should be brought back as a deterrent for would-be murderers, says the Police Federation in the wake of Pc Laurence Brown's killing.

A Federation spokesman said: "We firmly believe that the death sentence should be made available to the courts for the offence of murder and that it would have a deterrent effect. We also want to see the gun laws tightened up, to make it more difficult for criminals to get hold of weapons."

"At the moment the emphasis is on proving why a person shouldn't be allowed to own a shotgun, rather than why they should. It seems too easy for criminals to get hold of a gun."

But, despite the shooting, most police officers still do not want to be armed. "That would just escalate the use of guns by the criminal community," said the Federation spokesman. "Police carrying weapons could provoke criminals into using their guns in times of panic or stress."

"If an armed criminal goes out to commit a crime, he obviously intends to escape afterwards. If trapped, some would threaten to use the gun and others would actually use it. Our police officers are the envy of the world because they don't carry guns and we want it to stay that way."



● Murdered: Rauljibhai Patel.



● Murdered: Dorcen Vaux.



● Murdered: Baldev Honsale.

Man, 20, charged with murder and stealing shotguns

AN UNEMPLOYED 20-year-old man has been charged with the murder of Pc Laurence Brown.

Mark Gaynor, of no fixed address, appeared handcuffed in a detective at Old Street Magistrates' Court on Wednesday.

He is also accused of stealing four shotguns, an air rifle and other property during a burglary in Enfield.

Wearing jeans and a multi-coloured T-shirt, he was remanded in custody until Wednesday, September 26, after a request by prosecutor Carl Holmes.

Alan Strachen, defending, made no application for bail, but applied for legal aid, which was granted.

HG 31.8.90

Action group aims to combat attacks on Jewish targets

JEWISH radicals are to launch a campaign against antisemitism and racism that will become a self-defence and vigilante force if recent attacks continue.

The move has been condemned by the Board of Deputies of British Jews, however, and further highlights the growing divisions within the 350,000-strong Jewish community over how to respond to anti-Semitism.

Since May, there have been increasing attacks on buildings and people. Cemeteries and synagogues have been vandalised in north London, Manchester and Leeds, and a Holocaust memorial lauded with swastikas and the words "Jew Scum".

Jewish Action against Racism and Fascism will be launched in October. Its founders, drawn from Jewish centre-left and left-wing organisations, have been meeting throughout the summer. It is one of the initiatives being discussed by younger Jews and is indicative of a mood of growing militancy. Jewish Action's programme is likely to lead to a confrontation with community leaders.

David King, one of the organisers and a member of the Jewish Socialist Group, said: "The initial aim is to mobilise the Jewish community against anti-Semitism. JARF will be as broad-

By Adam LeBor

based as possible and we aim to get the board to take anti-Semitism more seriously and be more open about what's going on. They have a defence committee but it doesn't seem to do anything visible."

Mr King said that Jewish Action would not be a street-fighting organisation but would concentrate on organising long-term local self-defence work in areas where attacks were taking place.

"If the situation deteriorates, and there is a significant increase in the number of attacks on individual Jews and premises, we will organise self-defence patrols on a local basis by the people under threat. They are needed now in Stamford Hill. But the Jewish community cannot defend itself on its own and needs to make links with other ethnic minorities."

Jewish Action could forge a new alliance between sections of the Jewish left and the strict Orthodox community, which is also not affiliated to the Board of Deputies, but for religious rather than political reasons. Stamford Hill, in north London, home to 12,000 strictly orthodox and Hasidic Jews has recently been the scene of violence and vandalism.

The traditionally passive Hasidim, recognisable because of their distinctive dress, have long been potential targets. But now they are drawing on the experiences of co-religionists in New York and there have been reports of physical confrontation. At least one religious leader is calling for the community to make citizens' arrests of attackers.

Rabbi Herschel Gluck said: "All we want is freedom of movement, and the ability to get on with our business without the fear of being mugged and beaten. The message to the authorities is please get something done to stop this needless fear and helplessness, because if you don't you will leave us with no alternative than to do it ourselves. The British legal system includes the idea of citizens' arrest and we believe in the principles of British law."

Searchlight magazine, which investigates the far right, said Nazis and a newly-established British section of the Ku-Klux-Klan were responsible for many of the attacks. "These are not kids, or drunks, but organised hard-line Nazis. They are redoubling their attacks, which are focusing on the Jewish community. The events in eastern Europe have given a tremendous impetus to fascist groups in western Europe."

The Board of Deputies, which has been accused of under-playing anti-Semitism, believes there is no increase in anti-Semitism, just an increase in anti-Semitic incidents, and no need for a new self-defence initiative.

Raymond Kalman, chairman of the defence committee, who earlier this week formed part of a board delegation which met David Waddington, the Home Secretary, said: "Self-defence in Stamford Hill is pure fiction, an idea in the minds of a small number of frustrated Jews who feel nobody is doing anything for them. The people talking about this are not involved in defence or security."

"They are not prepared to spend their Saturday morning standing in front of a synagogue, but when someone chucks a brick through a window they get excited." Contacts with other ethnic minorities were taking place, Mr Kalman said. "Any respectable representative is always welcome to discuss things with us."

There are, however, dissenting voices within the board. A committee member, Professor Geoffrey Alderman, said: "Having a chat with the Home Secretary is very nice but things have gone beyond that stage. There needs to be more co-operation between Jews and Blacks and Muslims."

The communal leadership should draw on the American experience of combating anti-Semitism, Professor Alderman said. "The board has cold-shouldered visitors from mainstream American self-defence organisations like the B'nai B'rith anti-defamation league. People should not take the law into their own hands but with physical attacks there has to be a degree of self-help. JARF could be a good idea and I wouldn't condemn the organisation out of hand."

INDEPENDENT

1.9.90

Police on rampage after death of colleague

HACKNEY police officers were accused of "going on a rampage" in the aftermath of the killing of PC Lawrence Brown last week.

A Dalston family home was attacked by some 40 officers who removed five people from the house before releasing the last of them some fourteen hours later without pressing any charges whatsoever.

The five included two brothers and their sister, resident in the house, and two family friends who were visiting.

A member of the family, which will not be identified, says the police knocked on the door at approximately 10.00am last Tuesday. "They told me to open the door or else they would use their sledgehammers to break it down," said one family member.

As the police swarmed inside the house they warned all present that they were being arrested in connection with the murder

of PC Brown.

The sixteen year-old female member of the group is the only one who recognised anything faintly resembling an apology on being released at approximately 7.00pm that evening.

In addition the family returned home to find that their dog had been strangled. The pet had been threatened earlier after biting one of the marauding police officers.

One of the brothers claims he has suffered serious harassment from Hackney police officers over the past two years and believes this latest attack was initiated against his family as a part of this campaign of abuse.

The mother of the three residents returned home later that day to find her house ransacked, following the police's fruitless search for firearms and weapons, and her children gone.

"We are forced to stay with relatives now because we no longer feel safe in the house," she says.

The family is determined to pursue civil action.

Chief Supt Mulvihill told *Caribbean Times* he was unable to comment on the matter as it was the subject of a formal complaint and as such was now sub-judice.

The Hackney Community Defence Association (HCDA) condemned the action as heavy-handed. "The fact that a police officer has been killed

should not give officers carte blanche to simply trample on the rights of innocent people," said an HCDA spokesperson.

● A man who was arrested within one hour of PC Brown's killing has been remanded in custody to help the police with their inquiries. Two shotguns were retrieved from the Regent's Canal on Tuesday morning by police divers

CARIBBEAN TIMES

4.9.90

Assault claim after raid

VIKRAM DODD reports on a Hackney family's charge of police harassment

Forty armed police raided a family home in Hackney following the shooting of a police officer last week. The family allege assault against the Met and may sue, saying they are so scared that they want to be rehoused and will not sleep in the house. The mother told CL: 'The police have ruined my life. I haven't been able to eat since the raid.'

PC Laurence Brown was murdered at around 2.30 am on Aug 28. A man later charged with the offence was arrested half an hour afterwards. Police raided the house in Dalston Lane at 10 am. Five people were arrested and held for up to 13 hours before being released without charge.

The family do not wish to be named.

Asleep inside the house at the time were two brothers aged 18 and 19, their 16-year-old sister and two friends. The mother told CL: 'I had just popped out to make a phone call. I came home to find such a scene. I felt so helpless. I felt so scared. We didn't even know that a policeman had been shot.'

The family say they offered no resistance, and that officers were violent and abusive. The 18-year-old youth said: 'I was handcuffed so tightly that the nerves in my wrist were crushed. My hands are now numb. A policeman told me I was being arrested for murder.' His

brother says officers banged a door in his face, leaving him with blurred vision and a lump on his eye. His sister said: 'I was asleep and woke to find a policewoman pinning me down. I just heard screams.'

The officers killed one of the family's two dogs after it bit an officer. The family say the police have offered no explanation as to why they raided the house. Scotland Yard has confirmed that the raid took place, but will not comment on the family's allegations.

Graham Smith, for the Hackney Community Defence Association, said: 'There seems to be no logic to the raid. There was nothing to link them to the death of the police officer. Why have this raid after arresting someone in connection with the crime?'

The police had no warrant for the raid, but under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act they can search a house on 'reasonable grounds'.

CITY LIMITS

6.9.90

Murdered PC: tenants want change-of-name tribute

GRIEVING tenants on the estate where PC Laurence Brown was murdered are calling for the name of the flats to be changed in tribute to his memory.

Residents of Orwell Court, in Powhall Road, Haggerston, want the flats to be renamed Laurence Brown House as a lasting reminder of the City Road copper, gunned down last week as he answered a routine call about an attempted car theft.

The 27-year-old constable, whose wife had given birth to a baby daughter just four months earlier, died within minutes of being shot in the chest at point-blank range with a sawn-off shotgun.

His family, friends and colleagues from Hackney, City Road and Stoke

Newington police stations were all at the special prayer service held last Friday at the site of the shooting.

But residents of the flatblock want a permanent reminder of the brave copper.

Ex-Hackney mayor Betty Shanks, who has organised a fund to care for the bereaved wife and baby, said: "It's what the tenants here want, and we're determined to do it."

"It would be a fitting tribute to his memory and, although we realise it could take a long time to go through the necessary procedures, we're confident we'll get the go-ahead."

Hackney's top cop, Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill, said: "This is typical of the warmth and generosity of the people of this locality. Both myself

and my colleagues would feel honoured if this happened and I'm sure the council will look upon the suggestion favourably."

"I know that the spontaneous response of Hackney people to the tragic death of PC Larry Brown brought tremendous comfort to his family."

A spokesperson for Hackney Council promised: "If the tenants approach us with this request, we will give it every consideration."

An inquest into PC Brown's death was opened and adjourned at Poplar Coroner's Court on Wednesday.

So far the Emma Brown Appeal has raised more than £2,000.

☛ Mourners pay their respects - see page 5.



Close to tears, murdered policeman Laurence Brown's four-month-old daughter is hugged by her mother Janet at a special memorial service at the site of the killing.

Photo courtesy The Sun newspaper.

Bid to bust drug menace

UNDERCOVER cops have revealed a growing drug problem in the East End and launched a new campaign to stop it getting worse.

Investigations and arrests since March show dealing in and use of cannabis, cocaine, speed and other amphetamines is on the increase.

Now drug squad detectives at Bethnal Green have launched their "Push Out Drugs" campaign and set up a special locally-based team to tackle the problem.

They will be handing out leaflets at clubs, pubs and schools all over Bethnal Green, Globe Town and Spitalfields giving details of a confidential 24-hour telephone for anyone who is users, dealers or parents who are worried about drugs.

Detective Inspector Brian Moore told the Gazette: "Since March we have been running a small drugs intelligence team to find out if there is a drugs problem and, if so, what size it is."

Information and arrests have led

us to set up a full time team to try to combat the use of drugs affecting the area.

"We have been seizing everything from amphetamines to cocaine in small quantities but, as yet, no hallucinogenic drugs like LSD or acid and no crack."

"The problem affects the whole community - all ages and races - and we will be trying to get the 'Push Out Drugs' message across everywhere," he said.

The team will be headed by Detective Sergeant Vince Napolitano with two other drug intelligence officers who can call on a back-up squad of 20 other officers if the going gets tough.

"The job is no more dangerous than the regular job any officer in uniform may face going about his or her duty from day-to-day," Det Insp Moore added.

The Push Out Drugs line is open now on 071 488 5280.

☛ Pictured right: drug squad cop Vince Napolitano - out to crack the growing drug problem.



Deaf group find that police phones are on the right lines



A GROUP of visitors from the Jewish Deaf Association learnt just how Stoke Newington police are listening to their problems.

After a full tour of the brand new Supernick, the visitors inspected the station's very own minicom, which puts the deaf in touch with the local cops.

The system uses a keyboard telephone, which deaf people can use to call the police from their homes.

Their message immediately appears on a screen in the station's control room where officers can reply to their call.

Linda Woolf, her mum Dorothy Habero and son Tyrone are all pictured looking at the system with Chief Superintendent Peter Twist (back left). Po John Drew is sitting at the control desk.

Chief Supt Twist said: "We acknowledge that deaf and hard-of-hearing people are just as entitled to police services as anyone else, but frequently find it difficult to make contact."

"We hope deaf people wherever they are will be able to use this minicom either to contact this station, or to request assistance which we can pass on to any one of the 76 control rooms in other police stations throughout London."

Pat Goldring, executive director of the Jewish Deaf Association, said: "This will give deaf people a lot more confidence."

"Now they know they can call the police on the minicom in the event of any emergency."

The minicom number is 071 923 3824.

Date fixed for police assault case hearing

SEVEN policemen suspended for three years for allegedly beating up Gary Stretch will finally appear in front of a disciplinary hearing in October.

Their claim that too much time has gone by since the incident to allow for a fair hearing was thrown out in the High Court last Friday.

Justice Popplewell decided that they were not using the proper procedure and threw out the objection after hearing two days of evidence.

The officers, who are all based at City Road police station, will only be able to complain about the delay once the disciplinary hearing is over. It will now start on October 1.

By then it will be two years 11 months since Mr Stretch was allegedly beaten up outside the Limes pub in Hackney Road, in November 1987.

The seven officers, all constables, were suspended from duty only days after the incident and have not worked since.

Gary Stretch told the Gazette: "I'm so relieved we've finally got a date set, but I don't think I'll believe it until the hearing

actually starts. I'm also really nervous because I still don't know what to expect."

Gary's father Eddie added: "We are very pleased the officers are going to face the music. But such a lot of time has gone by - it's now almost three years since this all happened."

Solicitor Raja Butt said: "This is good news, because it means the officers are going to have to answer for their behaviour. But I have no illusions about the disciplinary hearing. We still have a battle, not only with the officers but with the way the hearing will be conducted."

Mr Stretch will be cross-examined by a barrister despite having no representation of his own during the hearing, he said.

Chief Superintendent Niall Mulvihill, of Hackney Police, said: "The disciplinary tribunal will now be reconvened and I hope the matter will be resolved soon afterwards."

Keeping the officers on suspension while the Police Complaints Authority collected evidence against them and then set up the disciplinary hearing has cost over £250,000 in wages, the Gazette revealed last month.

HC

7.9.90

Tears flow for shot policeman

TEARS flowed freely at the open-air memorial service for the murdered City Road bobby, Pc Laurence Brown, with his widow and young daughter among the many mourners.

As row upon row of sombre, uniformed policemen from all over London stood silently mourning a lost colleague, wife Janet and four-month-old Emma were comforted by relatives and friends.

The 27-year-old mum - whose fairytale romance with Pc Brown began when they were childhood sweethearts - broke down and wept as the service continued.

But she was obviously moved by the touching messages tied to the wreaths at the spot where her husband was killed, in a car park by Orwell Court in Pownall Road, Haggerston.

And her bewildered baby, too young to realise she will never know her father, managed a smile when children from the estate handed her a giant black and white toy panda.

Hundreds of local folk were also there, to show the bereaved family that Hackney still has a heart. They represented the silent majority in the borough, shocked that someone who was there to protect

them could be gunned down in cold blood.

Pensioner Milly Karlo, 83, came in her wheelchair to the service. "The police risk their lives for all of us," she said, "and I'm here as a mark of respect for a local copper who was only doing his job."

Heads bowed in prayer, many of the police cried openly as the Bishop of Stepney, Jim Thompson, took the service.

"The police live in the midst of evil in our society," he said. "They all know that one day they may have to stop someone who draws a gun or a knife to kill. This is a great burden we ask them to carry for us."

"But they are human beings - someone's husband, wife, father, mother, son, or daughter - and they have the same feelings as the rest of us."

Peter Brown, the murdered policeman's father, said thank-you to the people of Hackney for sharing the grief and loss the family felt.

"This was your personal tribute to Laurence," he said, "and it brought home to us how deeply complete strangers share our grief. Being with you today is our way of showing appreciation for all you have done."

"God bless you for your kindness."



● The Bishop of Stepney, Jim Thompson, comforts the family of Pc Larry Brown after the memorial service.



● Police from all over London gathered to pray in memory of their colleague.



● Ex-Hackney mayor Betty Shanks comforts baby Emma, the four-month-old daughter of the murdered constable.

Police chief pays tribute to public support

AS you will know, in the early hours of the morning of August 28, 1990, Police Constable Larry Brown of City Road Police Station was killed while performing police duties in Hackney.

Both his family and his colleagues are shattered by the tragic loss of such a fine man and exemplary police officer. However, all of those who are suffering most at this time have been comforted by the wonderful expressions of support coming from the public in the borough of Hackney.

The spontaneous words and gestures from so many different quarters have served to reinforce the determination of Lar-

ry's colleagues to continue to supply the quality service I know they work so hard to provide.

Overwhelming generosity, in the form of donations and gifts, are coming in each day. I hope, in due course, to be able to write personally to each contributor but, in the meantime, would wish to thank the large number of anonymous contributors many of whom have been too upset to supply their personal details.

Larry Brown was dedicated to public service and those privileged to have known him will cherish his memory. - N. G. MULVIHILL, CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT, HACKNEY AND CITY ROAD POLICE STATIONS.

Watchdog group questions 'different attitude'

TENANTS from Orwell Court who held a candlelit vigil for two days before the memorial service did so partly because they feared gangs of yobs would steal, trample, or destroy the wreaths and floral tributes.

And some local people feel the police reaction to the killing would have been far different if it hadn't been a policeman that was gunned

down.

A spokesperson for the police watchdog group, Hackney Community Defence Association, said: "It goes without saying that we offer our condolences to the family of the shot constable, but there is a stark difference in attitudes to the death of a Pc and the death of a person in police custody."

HACDA claim that the speed with which the police reacted to catch Pc Brown's killer compares unfavourably with the fact that no-one has been caught for the shopkeeper murders in Lower Clapton Road.

"Murders should be investigated with equal determination."

But Hackney's top cop, Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill, reacted angrily

to the accusation.

"All murders are investigated in a diligent and comprehensive fashion, and that is without exception," he said.

"If the comments attributed to the HACDA are accurate then they are outrageous and extremely insensitive in their timing. I refute totally what is being suggested."

Letter to the Editor

Time to get tough with thugs

I'M SICK to death of hearing people like Chief Superintendent Mulvihill "reassuring" us that the police will continue to strive to make the streets of Hackney "a safer place". I've heard it from him like a repeat pop record and I've heard it from at least three senior policemen before him.

The truth of the matter is that all Hackney police do in this borough is stumble through trying to cope. Nobody, including me, can help but admire the individual copper trying to manage in this area. My grievance is with the police hierarchy. They sit on their backsides reflecting on their future knighthoods and reassuring people who are getting knifed and mugged that we haven't got much to worry about.

We don't need to hear the commissioner of police telling us what a great policeman Pc Brown was. We want him telling judges to drop dead when they sentence thugs to life-and-cuddle sentences. We want to hear him tell ministers to get lost when they tell him they will not allow places like Hackney to have sufficient numbers of policemen.

The last thing Mrs Brown needs is cash.

She wants comfort in her grief and one of those comforts would be the knowledge that something realistic is being done to stop other women becoming policemen's widows.

There are people calling the killer of Pc Brown an animal. But the biggest rats are those who helped him. Those who allowed four shotguns to be stolen as easy as nicking a Mars bar. Those who nurture and create these thugs by condoning their thuggery by pathetic sentencing. Those in parliament whose only motivation is ego and wealth. Those in the police force who glorify their self importance and do nothing to benefit the people and policemen in places like Hackney.

My sincerest wish is that when Mrs Brown feels better, she will come to Hackney to meet the people. We did care for her husband and we'd care about his replacement.

We are described as the "poor borough". Without a doubt, we are that much poorer by losing Larry. God bless his wife and little daughter. - TOM BENFIELD, HACKNEY (FULL ADDRESS SUPPLIED).

Murder hunt police hit me, claims youth

POLICE have launched an investigation after a family home was raided just hours after the murder of Pc Larry Brown last week.

It is alleged that two teenagers were assaulted and a dog killed last Tuesday after about 40 police raided the home in Dalston Lane, just 100 yards from Hackney police station - and that officers told one 18-year-old he was being arrested in connection with Pc Brown's murder - five hours after a man was arrested.

Two brothers, aged 18 and 19, their 16-year-old sister and two family friends were held for up to 14 hours at Hackney police station before being released without charge, they say.

One of the brothers, 18, claims he had a door banged in his face and his friend, 16, says he was pinned to the floor and punched. Both claim they have been harassed by police over the last four years.

When the young sister was released after 10 hours, she claims that an officer apologised and said they had picked on "the wrong people at the wrong time."

The family plan to sue the police. The mother, who returned from talking to a neighbour to find the raid in progress, said: "It's really frightening. We've no clue at all why they came here, that's the biggest shock of it."

Graham Smith, of Hackney Community Defence Association, said: "The fact that a police officer has been killed doesn't give the police carte blanche to do what they want."

Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill, of Hackney police, said: "This matter has been recorded as a complaint against the police and is therefore being investigated by independent officers from outside the division."

Words: Stewart Fowler
Pictures: Ray Collins

HG 7.9.90

PENSIONER DIES IN COP CHASE

A HACKNEY pensioner has become the latest person to be killed in a road smash involving a police car engaged in a high-speed chase.

May Bartlett, 77, of Manor Road, Stoke Newington, was a back seat passenger in a car driven by her son Douglas on Sunday when the accident happened.

She was on her way to Folkestone for a family day out at the seaside with Douglas, 41, and his wife Gay, 43, when the police car ploughed into the side of their Vauxhall Cavalier as it chased a suspect vehicle in Enfield.

Twelve people, including one policeman, were killed in similar smashes in London last year, the latest for which figures are available.

The white-haired pensioner died instantly

by STEWART FOWLER

after being hurled through the rear window and onto the opposite carriageway from the force of the impact.

Police experts launched an immediate investigation into the smash, but stressed that the marked police car had its siren on and lights flashing at the time of the collision.

"I don't hold a grudge against the police for the death of my mother," said Douglas, who suffered whiplash neck injuries in the crash. "They've got a very difficult job to do."

"I can't remember anything about the accident at all, it's a blank. The first thing I do recall is waking up in hospital having X-rays taken."

"We were going to Folkestone for a day out. My mother was a bit of a tomboy and very lively for a woman of 77!"

Mrs Bartlett spent most weekends with her son.

A friend and neighbour at her block of flats in Manor Road, Marion Crawford, 62, said: "Douglas was her life, and she always looked forward to seeing him."

"She was a lovely, happy-go-lucky person."

Mayor's warning to police after latest attacks on Asians

A MANIAC knifeman brutally stabbed two Asian shopkeepers this week in the "murder mile" where two other Asian traders were shot dead.

Hackney police are treating the stabbing of chemist Illyas Vankawala at his shop in Marc Street on Monday afternoon as attempted murder, and they are linking it with another stabbing two days later on a newsagent in nearby Well Street.

The 32-year-old pharmacist is in a serious condition in Homerton Hospital after being knifed four times in the back as well as suffering face and chest wounds.

Mr Vankawala was stabbed in a frenzied attack when he refused to hand over money.

Detectives believe the same man slashed the face of newsagent Kantilal Choulani, 44, after robbing his shop in Well Street on Wednesday afternoon.

The two latest attacks have caused further alarm among the Asian community in the area after the shootings of shopkeepers Raajibhai Patel and Baldev Hoodle.

'Fed up'

Hackney Mayor, Cllr Shuja Shaikh, responded to the new attacks by warning police: "The people of Hackney are fed up with the long delays in catching criminals and bringing them to justice. The police's credibility is at stake. They need to show they are capable of winning the war against personal violence."

Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill, of Hackney Police, claimed they were doing all they could to prevent such attacks. "Other than have a police officer at every shop in Hackney we can't do much more," he said.

The knifeman was a 6ft-tall West Indian aged about 20. He had a moustache and may have worn a brown leather jacket. Phone the incident room with any information on 071-488 6536 or 071-790 1568.



May Bartlett and her son Douglas enjoy a day at the seaside in happier times.

HG 14-9-90

The 'ultimate sacrifice'

Mourners pay their last respects to police constable Larry Brown

MURDERED Pc Laurence Brown was laid to rest last Friday with full police honours.

His wife Janet, holding baby daughter Emma, wept quietly as the funeral service took place - at the same church where the childhood sweethearts were married just six years ago.

Leading the police honour guard were Pc Peter Townsend and Wpc Fiona McDonald, the two City Road coppers who were with Larry Brown when he was gunned down with a sawn-off shotgun in the car park of Orwell Court in Pownall Road, Haggerston.

They fought back tears as they slow-marched behind the coffin, which was draped in the Metropolitan Police flag with a wreath of red and white roses and a snow white teddy bear on top.

The bear - a symbol of hope at a time of despair - was a grateful gift from baby Emma to a father she had hardly known.

The Rev Roger Gaylor, the same vicar who married the young couple, told Janet: "Love has not been defeated by this tragedy. It lives on no matter what."

And Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill, Hackney's top cop, talked of the murdered policeman's "impish sense of humour" and added:

"Larry believed there was only one way of doing any job - and that was the right way."

"He was a man of principle who never flinched from his responsibility, whether as husband, father, son, friend or police officer. His memory stands as an inspiration to us all."

Six colleagues from City Road police station acted as pall bearers, carrying the coffin to the candlelit altar in a grim reminder of the violence and barbarity that haunt Hackney.

All the police top brass were there, including Met Commissioner Sir Peter Ince, in recognition of the "ultimate sacrifice" a police officer is sometimes asked to make in the line of duty.

Not all the hundreds of mourners who came to pay their last respects to the murdered constable could fit into the church and crowds spilled out into the street.

Among the many wreaths and floral tributes was one in the shape of a policeman's helmet, brought specially by the grieving tenants of Orwell House. They are trying to have the flats re-named in the constable's memory.

As the funeral cortege drove

off to a private cremation, the crowds dispersed - each with their own thoughts, to their own homes, their own jobs.

But the loneliest person of all was Janet, a 27-year-old widow and mother who just weeks ago had everything to live for. Her life can never be the same again.



● Above, colleagues from City Road police station carry the coffin from the church. Right, the wreath from tenants of Orwell Court, Haggerston.



● Wpc Fiona McDonald and (below) Pc Peter Townsend, who were with Pc Laurence Brown when he was shot.



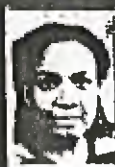
● Janet Brown and baby Emma are comforted by the murdered policeman's father.

REPORT: STEWART FOWLER; PHOTOS: RAY COLLINS

TALKING POINT



with
Diane Abbott
MP



Put people first - not material possessions

A FORTNIGHT ago I attended the memorial service for Pc Larry Brown, who was gunned down in Pownall Road, Hackney.

The simple, but moving service was held in the open air, alongside Orwell Court estate on the very spot where he died in a pool of blood.

Led by the Bishop of Stepney, attended by the family and many senior policemen, the service was, above all, a chance for local people to show their respects.

Like everyone else, I was horrified to hear of this shooting, coming so soon after the death by armed robbers of Rasjithai Patel and Baldev Hoodle at their shops on the Lower Clapton Road. With the stabbing of Doreen Vaux on the notorious Holly Street estate, this is the fourth murder in Hackney since June.

It is difficult to imagine actually killing another person. Some people do it for revenge or in a jealous rage. But what makes someone gun down another human being in cold blood for a ring, a few thousand pounds or just because they are caught stealing a car?

Films, television and home videos are often saturated with killing and brutality. Young people brought up on a diet of these things may, perhaps, be desensitised to the reality of killing and must, to a greater or lesser extent, absorb an ethos where violence and killing is the mark of a real man.

We also live in a society which elevates the self and immediate personal gratification above any sense of community or obligation to other people. There are young men on the streets of Hackney who value themselves and their friends not by their achievements at school or work or whether

they support any children they may have fathered, but by how expensive the trainers on their feet are.

They are motivated by exactly the same thing as the three top businessmen who recently went to prison over the Guinness affair - the spirit of the Thatcher decade - sheer greed.

There is obviously a relationship between brutal poverty and crime and violence. And Hackney has some of the most brutal poverty in the country.

But, as well as all of these things, there must be something in the make-up of an individual which will make one man a killer and another - brought up in the same street and the same society - never consider it.

The availability of guns must contribute to a rise in armed criminals. The man charged with murdering Pc Laurence Brown stole four shotguns and an air-rifle in a robbery.

No doubt the real owner of the guns was perfectly respectable, but would someone in suburban Enfield need five guns? Private ownership of firearms should be much more severely limited.

The rising tide of hard drugs in Hackney must also have a bearing on this rise in violent crime.

Diane Abbott

Far too easy to get guns in Hackney

LIKE other residents of the Queensbridge area, we were extremely sad to hear of the killing of Pc Brown in our neighbourhood. Such a death is the more distressing when the victim is someone who is acting in the public service on our behalf.

This is the third such fatal shooting in Hackney in recent months, and it would seem that it is far too easy to get hold of guns here in Hackney. Everyone whose job involves serving the public - whether it be in a shop, on a bus, patrolling the street, or going out to the public on night visits, like doctors or health workers - is especially at risk.

It must be unacceptable to every member of our community that people who serve the public should now have to carry the additional burden of this very real threat in their day-to-day lives. We as a community must wholeheartedly condemn this rise in violence. In the end, as the streets become less safe, life becomes more difficult for everybody.

We extend all our sympathy to the families and friends of the victims of these three shootings. - A. WILKINSON, CHAIR, QUEENSBRIDGE LABOUR PARTY.

Support for the police

AFTER struggling through the trauma following the death of Pc Laurence Brown, I would like to say "thank you" to all the people of every colour and ethnic origin who stopped and gave us residents of Pownall Road their time and support and who, like us, needed to express their shock and grief.

Perhaps now we can put the other side of opinion forward - that the silent majority, an overwhelming percentage of decent people in this borough, support, respect and value our policemen and policewomen, and have a good relationship with them. - M. MASELL, ORWELL COURT, POWNALL ROAD, HAGGERSTON.

Shops put on alert

POLICE are warning shopkeepers against being duped by a gang of tricksters, including a heavily pregnant woman, after a spate of thefts.

The four-strong gang, all described as of Arabic appearance, go into a shop together and, while one distracts the assistant by pretending he needs help and can't speak English, another snatches money from the till.

They struck twice last Thursday afternoon and got away with £150 from Norlington Chemist, Broadway Market. And they tried the same con in Spar supermarket, Westgate Street, Hackney, but were thrown out of the store by the security guard.

HC

14.9.90

Tenants scared to rename flats after murdered Pc

TALKING POINT



with
Brian
Sedgemore
MP



More resources and less snide remarks, please!

THE murders of Pc Laurence Brown, Raajibhai Patel, Baldev Hoondle and Doreen Vaus have told the rest of the country that Hackney is violent as well as poor.

But does anyone outside Hackney care? Really care, I mean?

The media have done their bit in their usual fashion. The cameras have been and gone and by now they've forgotten that the tragedies ever occurred. Today and tomorrow there are new stories for them and Hackney has to be left to its own devices and its residents will, so everyone hopes, continue to suffer in silence.

For the media, Hackney is a series of shocking headlines - MURDER, RIOTS, FRAUD - behind which there is little thought and no analysis. The rest of Britain sees Hackney as a volcano, not even likely to erupt. But, as everyone knows, you can't do anything about volcanoes. The conventional wisdom is that our problems are insoluble.

Meanwhile, there are grieving widows, distraught families, frightened children, a lot of pain and a mountain

of poverty and crime. Those who suggest that there might be a link between some of these factors are dismissed as being soft in the head. Why?

Sir Peter Imbert, the Commissioner for the Metropolitan Police, held a press conference to mourn the murder of Pc Brown. Perhaps that was all he could do minutes after hearing of the monstrous deed. But now, some weeks on, I'd like to see Sir Peter hold another press conference.

At it he should tell us that he's going to put more police and more effort into crime prevention in Hackney where crime rates are at a staggering and unacceptably high level. Clear-up rates are unacceptably low. If Sir Peter needs more money from the Home Office to do this, then he should say so publicly at the press conference.

And then there's the government which preaches law and order and presides over record disorder and law-breaking. Of late, government Ministers have taken to sneering at Hackney. In this regard I was appalled recently to read in the Gazette of an attack on Hackney and its people by the Secretary of State for the Environ-

ment, Chris Patten MP. He seemed to be suggesting that in Hackney we glory in our poverty and that somehow it's our own fault.

Patten also seemed oblivious to the fact that it was his department that cruelly tagged us "Britain's poorest borough" at the same time as it was depriving us of the £100 million in rate support grant. And, God forgive him, Patten is the government Minister responsible for the hated poll tax which is crucifying so many local families.

I say to Patten and to other government Ministers: sneering at those in adversity doesn't help. And I ask him to hold a press conference in Hackney announcing that the government is at long last prepared to put more resources into the borough.

As for the rest of us, we should not only shed tears for the soul of Hackney, we should get angry and demand action.

Pin Sedgmore

FRIGHTENED tenants of Orwell House, where City Road copper Laurence Brown was shot, have given the thumbs down to plans to rename the block of flats in memory of the murdered policeman.

A door-to-door canvas of tenants at Pownall Road, Haggerston, found just one out of 78 in favour of the idea, with residents fearful the estate would become a target for anti-police yobs and vandals.

by STEWART FOWLER

Family says 'thank you' for support and sympathy

THE GRIEVING father of murdered Pc Laurence Brown has asked the Hackney Gazette to thank everyone in the borough for their support and sympathy.

Just two weeks ago his 27-year-old son was laid to rest at a moving funeral service at the same church where he married his wife, Janet.

Now Peter Brown has talked to the Gazette because it would be impossible for the devastated family to write individually to everyone who sent letters of sympathy.

He said: "My son's wife Janet, my wife Flossy, and his brothers Paul and Colin and their respective families express sincere thanks for all the messages of condolences, floral tributes and gifts for baby Emma that have been received."

"Thank you for arranging your very own memorial service which we attended, and also to the residents who made sure that the floral tributes placed at the scene of the tragedy were not damaged."

"Words cannot convey our personal sadness at this time, but neither can they express the extent of our thanks to you for all the support we received, which made us realise we were all sharing a common grief."

licences and library tickets etc., to the memory it would give to the block. People are frightened it might well become the target for yobs."

Colin Beattie, the Liberal Democrat councillor for the ward, adds: "At the memorial

service to Laurence Brown people were very emotional and were in favour of the renaming, but now they've had time to think about it. They don't want the estate to be associated with violence, death and murder."

Police watchdog group should be ashamed

SHAME on the police watchdog group, Hackney Community Defence Association, for appearing in the Gazette (September 7 issue) with a story of no substance at such an insensitive time following the murder of Pc Laurence Brown.

How outrageous of them to compare the murder of our Pc with the murders of our shopkeepers and to suggest that not all murders are investigated with equal determination.

When Pc Brown was murdered, his colleagues with him and was no doubt able to identify the assailant and immediately call for reinforcements, but there were no witnesses to identify the killers of the shopkeepers. But keep watching, watchdog group, and you will see them being caught and brought to justice - then, no doubt, you will shout "injustice".

May I remind them of the murder of Pc Stephen Tibbell. He was shot on his motorbike while off duty. It took some four to five years to bring his assailant to justice. Murder is murder and no matter whether a villain murders one of his own, a bank clerk, an old lady, a child, a shopkeeper or a policeman, he is pursued with the same vigour until he is brought to justice.

The HICDA's remarks can only have added to the misery and suffering of Pc Brown's widow and the families of the shopkeepers, but I am glad to be able to say to these families that the majority of the people of Hackney, who are honest, hard-working people, are behind them all the way and will give them all the support they can muster.

We shall help them and the police in every way we can to bring the killers to justice. - PHIL McCULLOUGH, CONSERVATIVE PARTY CHAIRMAN, SPRINGFIELD WARD.

HC 22.9.90

'We'll sue police for assault'



Earl Samuel (left) and Eazical Hippolyte with Earl's blood-stained shirt.

POLICE in Hackney have come under attack from two different families this week after four people were allegedly beaten up in two separate incidents.

Brothers-in-law Eazical Hippolyte and Earl Samuel have lodged an official complaint and are planning to sue police, claiming they were beaten up in the early hours of Saturday. On Monday mother and daughter Brenda and Natasha George were acquitted of obstructing the police and also plan to sue.

The men, both 33, were driving home at 4am after a game of snooker in the West End when they were stopped by a policeman in a panda car in Green Lanes, Stoke Newington.

When they asked why they had been stopped, they say the officer radioed for support and three officers turned up in a van and threw the two men in the back.

They claim Mr Samuel, who broke his ankle as he fell into the van, was punched in the face and stomach and left needing six stitches in the mouth.

Stoke Newington police said this week Mr Hippolyte had been driving erratically, but he replied: "It doesn't make sense. They are accusing me of careless driving at four in the morning and they didn't even breathalyse me."

Respect

"I have always had respect for the police," added Mr Samuel, of Tottenham. "Neither of us has ever been in trouble before. I broke my ankle in four places in April and it was just starting to heal. Now it's broken again. I was just about to think about going back to work."

Supt Stuart Giblin, of Stoke Newington police, confirmed that the two men had lodged a complaint and it had been passed on to the area complaints unit.

The men's allegations came as charges of obstructing the police against Brenda and Natasha George were thrown out by Old Street Magistrates' Court. The women are planning to sue police for unlawful arrest, unlawful imprisonment, trespass and assault.

Two officers came to their home in Balance Road, South Hackney, in July looking for Mrs George's son Valentine. But the women tried to stop the police from entering their home and were promptly arrested for obstruction.

They claim the case was thrown out by the court because the police had no warrant and could provide no evidence to give them reason to arrest Mr George.

Graham Smith, of Hackney Community Defence Association, which is supporting the two women, said: "They knew their rights, they stood their ground and the police obviously took exception to the fact that they had to explain themselves."

Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill, of Hackney police, said he did not know of the case but he would consider what action needed to be taken if he was officially written to about any complaints.

● Members of the Hackney Community Defence Association picketed Hackney police station on Saturday in protest at the raid on the two women's home. They were also protesting about other raids, including those on the homes of people suspected of involvement in the Trafalgar Square poll tax riots.

- Beaten up at four in the morning, claim snooker duo in car on the way home
- Magistrates throw out obstruction charges against mother and her daughter

HG 22.9.90

Hackney cops see acquittals



Natasha (left) and Brenda George – defied police's unwarranted attack on their home

picket of Hackney police station last week which received staunch support from the local community.

Judgement

"This latest judgement in favour of the George family serves as notice that local people are not prepared to sit back and accept these raids under the pretext of catching criminals but actually inflict terrorism against the local community," said a spokesperson.

● Hackney police officers claim to be caught in the throes of a crime wave. The recent killing of Hackney police officer Laurence Brown led to the arrest of a suspect within a half-hour and a spate of raids on private addresses which resulted in arrests but no further charges. Nevertheless, investigations into the murders of two local Asian shopkeepers – Mr Raojibhai Patel and Mr Saldev Hoodle two months ago on Hackney's notorious 'Murder Mile' – have failed to result in a single arrest.

by Michael Massive

A POLICE raid on a family home which culminated in the arrest of a mother and her daughter was judged illegal in a magistrates court last week.

Four Hackney police officers told Old Street Magistrates Mrs Brenda George was handcuffed because she refused to allow them to search her bedroom. However, arresting officer PC Allen denied throwing Mrs George onto her bed while cuffed or slapping her on the back of her head.

Warrant

WPC Hays claimed that when she showed Mrs George and her 17 year-old daughter, Natasha, a computer print-out of the warrant she had for the arrest of Valentine George Mrs George simply tore it up.

Nevertheless, Ms Quick, the presiding magistrate, said her investigations failed to

produce any evidence of the time or date that the warrant was issued in court.

WPC Hays denied being told that Ms George would require her inhaler for her asthma when she was being arrested.

Five foot eleven inches tall PC Allen denied jeering five foot tall Ms George and calling her "slag" and further claimed he went into a bedroom in the house and found men's clothing, an unmade duvet on a still-warm bed and an open window. He neglected to mention that the window leads out to a thirty foot sheer drop with no obvious handholds or drainpipes in evidence.

The four arresting officers told the court that they were compelled to force entry into the Georges' east London home to search for Valentine but denied acting in a threatening or abusive manner towards Mrs or Ms George.

Ms Quick said she believed the police

were "fulfilling their duties" and also referred to Section 125 of the Magistrates Court Act which states that the officer need not be in possession of the warrant at the time of seeking arrest.

Although Ms Quick offered no comment on the fact that she could not find any record of the warrant in question being issued she was forced to move that the defence had no case to answer.

Decision

Mr Howarth Andrew, counsel for the Georges, said he felt the decision proved that the Georges were right to deny the police entry to their home if they were not shown a warrant.

"The decision proves that officers must always give evidence of a warrant in any attempt to make a search of this nature," he said.

Ms George, who was hurled into a police van following her arrest clothed only in

her nightclothes, said she was "delighted" at the decision.

Ms George said she and her mother simply felt it was time they "took a stand at the way the police kept on hounding Valentine and harrasing" herself and her mother.

Mrs George said she "hardly believed my ears when I heard the

stories the police told the court".

Mrs George is considering taking legal action.

Epidemic

The Hackney Community Defence Association (HCDA) claims that police raids on civilian households had reached "epidemic levels". The HCDA organised a successful

CARIBBEAN TIMES

25.9.90

'They were out to beat someone up'

Stoke Newington and Hackney police are under renewed attack from black families in the borough.
JUDY HIRST reports

Anorth London family will be leading a protest demonstration outside Stoke Newington police station at 4pm this Saturday, after allegations that two of their members were manhandled and beaten up by the police.

Earl Samuel and Ezechiel Hippolyte were driving home in the early hours of September 15, after a snooker game in the West End, when they were pulled up by the police in Green Lanes, Stoke Newington.

'We were cruising along behind this panda car, at well under 30mph, when it suddenly braked in front of us,' Hippolyte told *CL*. 'When we asked why we'd been stopped, the officer claimed I'd been driving carelessly and called for reinforcements. Before we knew it, three of them were throwing us into the back of a police van.'

The two men, who are brothers-in-law, allege that Samuel was punched in the stomach and mouth in the ensuing fracas, subsequently needing six stitches to the face and dental treatment. The ligaments in a previously broken ankle, that had just begun to mend, were torn again when he was thrown into the van.

The brothers-in-law, who are both building workers in their early 30s, have never been in trouble with the police before. 'We couldn't believe what was happening to us. They just laughed at us and told us to shut up when we complained, boasting "We're the Stoke Newington police",' said Hippolyte. 'They were out to beat someone up that night. There was definitely some racism involved,' he alleged.

The two men's families approached the Hackney Community Defence Association for help after the incident, and have now lodged a formal complaint against the police and intend to sue them. 'We've got a very big family,' said Samuels. 'And they're all going to be there outside Stoke Newington police station this weekend, demanding something is

done.'

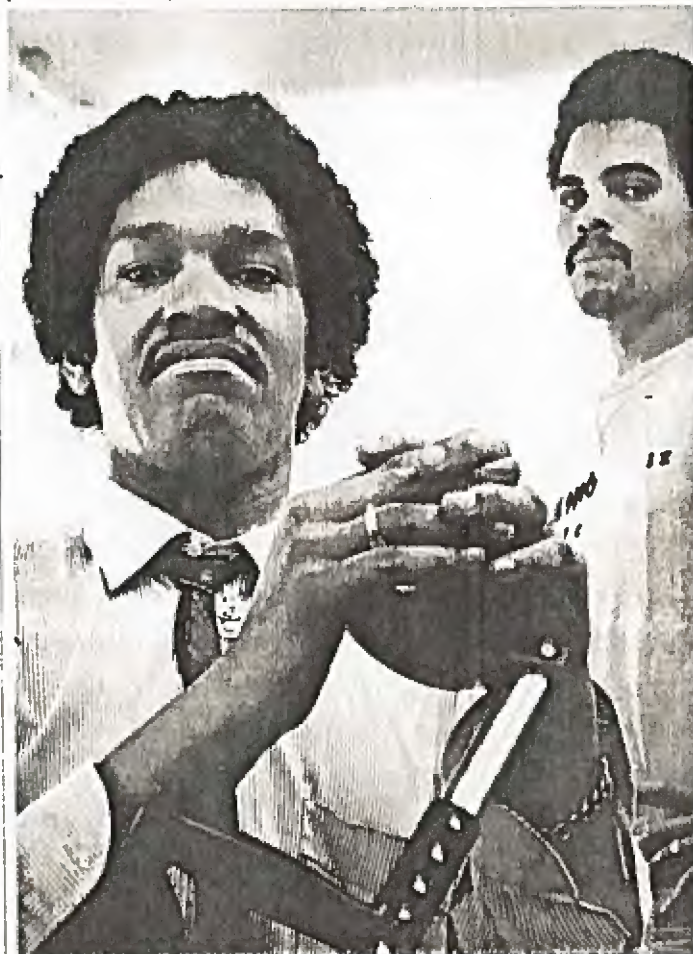
Another black family in Hackney who are planning to sue the police are the Georges. Charges of obstructing the police - made against Brenda George, and her 17 year old daughter Natasha, when police raided their South Hackney home in July - were thrown out by Old Street Magistrate's Court last week, after Hackney police failed to produce sufficient

evidence.

'They couldn't produce a warrant in court,' said Mrs George. 'Which isn't surprising, because they never had one. My daughter used to work in a solicitor's office, and she challenged them when they waved a bit of photocopied paper in our faces.'

Mrs George claims that she was thrown onto a bed by police officers, who said they were searching for her son Valentine, and 'nearly suffocated' as her arms were wrenched behind her back. She has since had to give up her job as a nurse, and look for clerical work, because of the damage she claims was done to her shoulder.

Scotland Yard would not comment on either case, except to say that a complaint had been received from Samuel and Hippolyte, and would be investigated.



Earl Samuel and Ezechiel Hippolyte: planning to sue the police

CITY LIMITS

27.9.90

Killing is horrifying, whoever the victim

I WAS astonished and offended to read (Gazette, September 19) that Phil McCullough found the comparison by Hackney Community Defence Association of the killing of Pc Brown with the killing of two shopkeepers to be "outrageous."

He was clearly suggesting that the death of a policeman is somehow more significant than the deaths of two shopkeepers! Violent death is always horrifying - no less so if you are killed at work in a shop than if you are killed at work as a policeman.

I would suggest, however, that there significant differences - firstly, the outrageous way in which the police and a few others have tried to make political capital out of the death of one of their officers, attempting to use his death to raise the image of the police in the eyes of the local community, and, secondly, the speed with which they apparently caught the perpetrator.

This would be more admirable if, as HCDA suggested in their comments, the police had been as diligent in pursuing the killers of our local shopkeepers.

Their attempts to improve their image might also have been more successful if they had concentrated on the latter rather than terrorising local people, such as the family whose home was raided by 40 armed police officers or such as Earl Samuel, whose story was printed in the Gazette last week - back on crutches with a broken ankle and with six stitches in his mouth after an encounter with Hackney's "community police."

Mr McCullough may be behind the police "all the way" but while the "honest, hard-working people" of Hackney, such as myself, read about and experience the sort of racism and brutality which seem to be so prevalent in Hackney police, he will have a lonely time of it. - MRS P. WARNER, ROGATE HOUSE, NIGHTINGALE ESTATE, MUIR ROAD, HACKNEY.

He must be living on a different planet

I THINK Tory Party chairperson Phil McCullough is living on a different planet. He seems to think that the life of a policeman cannot be compared to the life of a shopkeeper. He says that the police are quick in catching criminals and are doing their jobs properly.

I also would like to believe this, but there is outstanding evidence that makes me think differently. Over the last few months there have been many false arrests and unjustified raids.

Only a few months ago three young lads, aged 14 and 15, were beaten up and then falsely arrested. They were charged with nothing.

Then the raid following the death of Pc Lawrence Brown on an innocent family who were badly treated by the police in the "course of their duty." The only apology made to them by one policeman was: "You were the wrong family at the wrong time."

How long are the residents of Hackney going to be subjected to this kind of harassment, where the

police can raid their homes both verbally and physically abusing them?

Rather than slagging off community organisations, such as HCDA, who give support to people such as those mentioned, Phil McCullough should be applauding their work in exposing police brutality. - ALLISON CARR, CAZENOVE ROAD, STOKE NEWINGTON.

Mayor lashed for knocking the wrong target

Top Tory moves to back police

Three hurt in police chase

THREE people were hurt in a high-speed police chase through the streets of Hackney on Saturday, with one car wrecked and at least two others damaged.

The drama began at about 9.30am when two men in a BMW parked in Luke Street, Shoreditch, sped off as police approached the car.

They were chased to the market in Hoxton Street, Hoxton, where the men abandoned the car and ran off on foot in different directions.

One of the men escaped, but the other ran to nearby Phillipp Street, jumped into a red Toyota Celica, and drove off with police in hot pursuit.

After a two-mile chase, the car came to a halt in Amhurst Road, Stoke Newington, after colliding with a police van and then crashing into a parked car.

The Toyota driver, the driver of the police van and a woman passer-by were all treated at Homerton Hospital for minor injuries.

Police later recovered a semi-automatic pistol from rubbish in Hoxton Market, and a man was charged with possession of a firearm and conspiracy to rob.

Detectives now want to talk to anyone who was in the market between 9.45 and 9.55am and saw the second man - who has not been found - run away.

He is black and 5ft10ins tall and was wearing a navy blue jacket.

Det Sgt Mick Homer, from Hackney police station, said: "We would like anyone who saw this man running, or where he ran to, to get in touch on 071-488 7211."

A TOP Tory has reacted angrily to claims by Hackney Mayor, Cllr Shuja Shaikh, that the credibility of local police is at stake after the growing number of vicious assaults in the borough.

Speaking two weeks ago, after two Asian traders were brutally stabbed during robberies on their shops, the mayor said: "The people of Hackney are fed up with the long delays in catching criminals and bringing them to justice."

"The police's credibility is at stake. They need to show they are capable of winning the war against personal violence."

But Andrew Turner, the Conservative prospective parliamentary candidate for Hackney South and Shoreditch, accused Cllr Shaikh of hitting at the wrong target.

"He is in danger of reverting to Labour's normal stance of knee-jerk police bashing," said Mr Turner.

"Like the Mayor of Hackney I am concerned at the increasing level of violence and the unsolved murders and vicious assaults that bring shame to the borough," he added.

"But it is hitting at the wrong target to

blame the police. They need the support of local people to solve crime - they cannot do so alone and unaided.

"I call upon the borough's political leaders to do more than just blame the police - they should call on every decent citizen to report every crime, note every suspicious incident, and tell the police of every brother, son, or neighbour whose movements at the time of these appalling crimes are unaccounted for."

But Cllr Shaikh hit back at the "Big Brother is Watching You" attitude.

"It is the kind of system which is fascistic," he said, "like a totalitarian state where the father must spy on the son and the son on his father. That is totally unacceptable."

And he rejected Mr Turner's claims that he was anti police.

"I have been one of the greatest supporters of the police during the last 15 years," he said, "and was one of the first councillors to take the stand that the council must communicate with them."

"I was not condemning the police, I was trying to highlight their responsibility and express the genuine concern of people in Hackney. That is my duty as mayor of the borough, and my statement was quite clear."

Tory hits out over police critic

HACKNEY MP, Brian Sedgemore, has been branded a "brainless police basher" by Tory opponent, Andrew Turner.

The Conservative prospective parliamentary candidate for Hackney South and Shoreditch, hit out at his Labour opponent for criticising Hackney's police. The Labour MP had criticised low crime clear-up rates in his Talking Point column in last week's Gazette.

Addressing a meeting of local Tories, Andrew Turner, accused Brian Sedgemore of joining the 'blame the police' brigade.

"Instead of police-bashing why can't the local MP offer some constructive suggestions?" he asked.

"The council could make street lights work, they could mend lifts, appoint caretakers to all housing estates and install entry-phones and make sure they mend them when they go wrong."

"All these are within the power of any borough if they spend money sensibly," he added.

HC

28.9.90

Seven police face discipline hearing

Guardian 2-10-90

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

DISCIPLINARY proceedings against seven Metropolitan police officers are to start today, nearly three years after the incident that led to the complaint. The officers have been suspended on full pay throughout that time.

The complaints against them were made after a fight in The Limes public house, in Hackney, east London, in November 1987. It was alleged that the officers, who were all off duty, had assaulted and threatened customers in the pub.

One man, Gary Stretch, was temporarily blinded and suffered the partial severing of an ear, allegedly after an assault with a glass. Witnesses described him being dragged from the pub and found unconscious in the street. The seven officers were suspended within a week of the incident.

Mr Stretch, who now works as a driver, is to give evidence to the inquiry. It was to have started yesterday but was adjourned after one of the officers

was said to be unwell. The hearing, held in private before a Metropolitan Police deputy assistant commissioner and two civilian members of the Police Complaints Authority, is expected to last three weeks.

The constables, who deny the allegations, are Alan Barr, Paul Caddy, Peter Clissold, Paul Wells, David Thompson, Simon Haw and Carl Simon.

No criminal charges have followed the incident. The Director of Public Prosecutions decided in January 1989 that there was not sufficient evidence to proceed. Some witnesses were reported to have refused to give evidence.

Disciplinary papers were served on the officers, all based at City Road police station, Hackney, by Scotland Yard's complaints branch in July 1989.

A disciplinary tribunal was originally convened in May this year, but adjourned after lawyers for the officers argued that the defence had been jeopardised by the long delays.

Their application to the High Court to block the tribunal was dismissed last month by Mr Justice Popplewell.

GUARDIAN

2-10-90

Police face hearing in Gary Stretch case

SEVEN police officers from City Road station faced a disciplinary tribunal this week, nearly three years after they allegedly beat up a man outside a Hackney Road pub.

The officers allegedly beat up Gary Stretch outside the Limes pub in November 1987.

The tribunal is due to continue for a month as Mr Stretch and each of the seven officers give evidence.

As the proceedings started on Tuesday, one of the first witness to be called was the barmaid from The Limes on the evening of the alleged assault.

All of the officers, who are constables, were off duty at the time of the alleged assault, which left Mr Stretch with half his ear hanging off.

The officers are Alan Barr, Paul Cad- dy, Peter Clissold, Paul Wells, David

Tribunal starts three years after pub incident

Thompson, Simon Haw and Carl Simon. All seven have been suspended from duty since a week after the alleged assault, and were served with disciplinary papers by Scotland Yard in July last year.

They tried to have the disciplinary hearing dropped because too much time has elapsed since the incident for a fair hearing to take place. Their application was thrown out of the High Court by Mr Justice Popplewell last month.

Cash plea for police

COUNCIL leader John McCafferty plans to lead an all-party deputation to Home Secretary David Waddington to call for more funding for police in Hackney.

The visit to the Home Office was proposed in response to growing concern about crime in the borough.

Although a man has been charged with the killing of Pc Larry Brown, police are no nearer catching the murderers of Lower Clapton shop-keepers Raojibhai Patel and Baldev Hoondle.

The call was supported by both Liberal Democrat and Tory groups on the council.

New police chief at Stoke Newington
IT'S all change at Stoke Newington police station next week. Chief Supt Peter Twist leaves on Monday and is succeeded by Chief Supt Roy Clark.

Chief Supt Twist steps down after two-and-a-half years as the division's top cop to take over as chief inspector of support services for Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Newham and Barking and Dagenham.

Chief Supt Clark was his deputy for a year before leaving in April for a six-month course - and promotion.

Sky dive cops raise cash for Pc's widow

THE sky's the limit for 50 big-hearted coppers who will be leaping out of planes to raise money for murdered City Road policeman Laurence Brown's widow when they do their first parachute jumps.

The police officers and civilian staff from all over London, including Wpc Sally Henderson and Pc Lee Mummery, from Stoke Newington nick, will go to a special training day at the Peel Centre, Hendon, on Thursday, before doing the jumps.

Organiser Mike Dunne hopes to raise around £1,000 for Janet Brown, left to bring up her baby daughter alone after 27-year-old Pc Brown was gunned down in Orwell Court, Pownall Road, Haggerston,

as he answered a routine call about an attempted car theft.

The Flying Dragons parachute team from the Army's Queen's Regiment will be the course tutors helping the coppers to fly high.

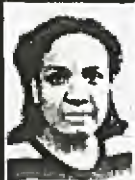
"Each person doing the jump has been asked to raise sponsorship money of £150," said Mike. "But people have been getting back saying they've got £200 or more." More information from Mike on 0836 706019.

HC 5.10.90

TALKING POINT



with
Diane
Abbott
MP



MOST of us have nothing to do with the world of prostitution except glimpsing those cards in newsagents' windows which say "big chest for sale" or "French lessons."

Occasionally prostitutes can seem Bohemian or vaguely romantic - more often a dirty joke. But for the women themselves the reality of prostitution is very grim indeed.

And life is also grim and unpleasant for people who are unfortunate enough to live in residential areas where prostitutes ply their trade. One such area is Amhurst Park and Seven Sisters Road, part of my constituency.

The presence of street-walkers in the Stoke Newington and Stamford Hill area goes back, I am told, to 1945 when American troops were billeted in Finsbury Park.

Whatever the truth of that, the problem has got very much worse in recent years.

Prostitution used to be rife in the Finsbury Park area and East Bank and West Bank roads. Vigorous local campaigning and traffic management schemes, to impede would-be kerb-crawlers, drove the prostitutes off the streets. But they are now heavily concentrated in the Amhurst Park area.

It is not uncommon to see half-a-dozen women on a street corner. Nor do they only go at night. Like self-employed business people everywhere, they are having to work longer and longer hours. Ladies, dressed in costumes more appropriate to Raymond's Revue Bar in Soho, have been spotted touting for business in Amhurst Park as early as

Rid our streets of prostitution!

nine o'clock in the morning.

They and their pimps can create a considerable noise nuisance, shouting and brawling late into the night when other, more conventionally employed citizens, are trying to sleep.

They use the passages and staircases of blocks of flats and other people's driveways to conduct their business, and little old ladies and gentlemen on one sheltered housing block regularly wake up to find their doorsteps littered with condoms and syringes.

Risk of harassment

Above all, the prevalence of prostitutes in the area means that non-prostitute women cannot go out at night without the risk of being harassed by kerb-crawlers. And while the prostitutes may be harmless, the pimps and drug dealers around them most definitely are not.

Stoke Newington police have a vice squad but it is far too small. And I suspect them of merely trying to contain the problem instead of genuinely taking steps to eradicate it from the area.

Different people have all sorts of ideas for dealing with prostitutes, ranging from long jail sentences, to legalising brothels.

For some time police outside London have been writing to kerb-craw-

lers advising them they were spotted in a red light district. This often left the men with a bit of explaining to do when a letter from the police turned up at home.

I suggested that London copy this idea to the then Home Secretary, Douglas Hurd, over a year ago. I am glad to see the Metropolitan Police are now taking the idea up.

What is not disputed is that a large and determined police presence could clear the area of prostitutes, if only temporarily. It is not good enough for the police to argue that they would only come back.

Some respite for the residents would be better than nothing. There is no reason why a part of quiet residential Stamford Hill should be turned into North London's answer to down-town Saigon.

There is a new Chief Superintendent starting at Stoke Newington. I hope this means a fresh start in the police attitude to the problem and a real effort to stamp it out.

Diane Abbott



Top cop David goes for the gold

CITY Road's top cop, Superintendent David Hynes, has notched up a long service and good conduct medal for 22 years of "exemplary service."

The medal was presented by Metropolitan Police Commissioner Sir Peter Imbert at a special ceremony at the Peel Training Centre, Hendon.

Supt Hynes joined the Met as a cadet in 1965 and his first posting was to Camberwell in 1968. He served at various police stations in South London before being promoted to Chief Inspector in 1984 when he moved to Notting Hill.

He was then promoted to Superintendent and took up his post at City Road in 1989. In 1970 he received a Deputy Assistant Commissioner's Commendation.

Supt Hynes is married with two teenage sons and is the property secretary of his local Methodist church.

● Pictured above: Police Commissioner Sir Peter Imbert congratulates Superintendent David Hynes on his long service medal.

More money and more police needed

I WELCOMED the report which stated that the leader of Hackney Council plans to lead an all-party delegation to the Home Secretary to call for more funding for police in Hackney (Gazette, October 5).

The Hackney Police Consultative Group took action on this issue in 1988 by sending a very detailed report to the then Home Secretary and the Commissioner of Police to justify the importance of a substantial increase in the number of police officers in an area such as Hackney with a high level of crime.

This was followed by meetings between officers of the Consultative Group, a Home Office Minister and the Commissioner, which resulted in a modest increase in the number of police officers allocated to both divisions in the borough.

We are now in the process of compiling a further report which calls for additional resources in view of the rising crime rate and the brutal crimes which are being committed all too frequently in Hackney.

It is therefore obvious that together with the majority of our people, members of the Consultative Group fully support any initiative which could result in a reduction in crime and bringing criminals to justice.

Although increased resources are important, there is a need for certain systems to be tightened up to ensure that much stiffer sentences are imposed on the people who attach no importance whatsoever to other people's lives or safety.

I hope that while we are doing all we can locally, our MPs will put pressure on the appropriate people at national level.

While we look forward to the council being successful in getting additional funding, we must also hope that the police have the same level of success in recruiting many more men and women to join the police force. - BETTY BLUMFIELD, CHAIR, HACKNEY POLICE COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE GROUP.

HC 12.10.90

Home from home for new top cop

IT'S a second homecoming for Stoke Newington's new top cop, Roy Clark, who has returned to take charge at the station where he first joined the force 20 years ago.

Mr Clark took over as Chief Superintendent of Stoke Newington from Mr Peter Twist on Monday - and he's certainly familiar with the territory. "It's an area I know well. This is where I spent my first two years as a Pc," says Mr Clark, 42, who now lives in Enfield with his wife and two children.

"I lived for three years over there," he adds, pointing to the old section house behind the brand-new supernick in Stoke Newington High Street.

Since starting as a Pc, Mr Clark has served at every station in Hackney division and in Scotland Yard's flying squad, and worked under the district assistant commissioner for North East London.

After arriving at Stoke Newington as Superintendent in April 1989, Mr Clark masterminded the move from Dalston police station to the new supernick before leaving for a six-month training course for high-flying cops.

The course primes them for top posts in the

Met from commander right up to police commissioner - but for the moment he only has eyes for Stoke Newington.

"I just want to continue the good work started by Mr Twist. The area has its own peculiar problems and there is some very good work being done, both by many members of the community and the police, to overcome these."

Mr Twist is leaving Stoke Newington after two-and-a-half years to become Chief Superintendent of Support Services, based at the area HQ in City Road.

"I'm delighted that Roy Clark is available to take over from me," he said. "It was always our personal wish that I might be able to hand over to him."

Relationship

In his years as Stoke Newington's top cop, the improved relationship both with the black community and Hackney Council gave him most satisfaction said Mr Twist.

But he added: "The one source of regret is that crime in the borough has continued to increase. The number of people who are prepared to leave by criminal means seems to be increasing."



Ch Supt Peter Twist welcomes Stoke Newington's new top cop, Roy Clark.

Police launch new recruitment drive

THE Metropolitan Police are launching a recruitment drive in Hackney on Monday.

The week-long campaign is aimed at encouraging all sections of the community to join the force as uniformed officers, cadets, special constables or members of the civilian staff.

It is particularly keen on attracting school leavers and young people about to leave school who are considering the police service as a career.

It is being backed by Hackney's Police and Community Consultative Group whose members, along with local officers and police from the Met's recruitment branch will be on hand

to offer help and advice.

The Met's mobile careers display units will be at various venues in the borough.

It will be outside Safeway's supermarket, Stamford Hill on Monday and Tuesday between 12pm and 6pm and at Finsbury Square on Wednesday and Thursday between 10am and 4pm. On Friday and Saturday it will be outside Woolworth's store in Mare Street from 12pm to 6pm and 10am to 4pm.

There will also be careers teams based at Stoke Newington police station from Monday to Wednesday between 4pm and 8pm and at City Road police station on Thursday and Friday between 4pm and 8pm.

Councillor calls for safe-houses in empty properties

Women's refuges feel the strain as violence spirals

VIOLENCE in the home is spiralling and Hackney's refuges for battered women can't cope with the extra strain.

Figures for the first six months of this year show that twice as many Hackney women were referred to refuges compared to the same period last year.

At present there are 500 cases on the books of WPCs Karen Wren and Sonia Corfe, based at Stoke Newington's Domestic Violence Unit.

And Haggerston ward Liberal-Democrat Councillor, Colin Beadle, is

by MARK GOULD

calling for a system of safe houses to be set-up using some of the borough's 4,000 empty council properties where families could be rescued from domestic violence or racial harassment.

Karen Wren set-up the DVU over two years ago. "There are six refuges in Hackney which are all full at the moment. The nearest place I can get anyone into is Clapham, and many women don't want to go that far away because kids still have to go to school around here," she said.

And the refuge workers are also feeling the strain. "They are working under a lot of pressure as they rarely turn anyone away - mainly because there is nowhere else they can go."

"Many women and children are there for months and months because there is nowhere else for them to go," Sonia added.

"In the first six months of this year we have doubled the number of referrals compared to last year. There are over 500 and a lot of those want to get out of the area for good," said Karen.

Many of the refugees are painfully

overcrowded, flouting fire regulations because staff won't turn people away.

"If a house officially holds 10 people you will get double that number staying in the place."

"I have seen a woman and her kids sleep on a living room floor in one of the refuges because they are desperate to get out of the situation at home where they are being beaten," Karen said.

Cllr Beadle is asking Hackney Council to honour pledges he says they made in 1988 to provide safe-houses.

"Women and children are being

assaulted by husbands and boyfriends. There should be a system where there are six safe-houses per housing district so that families at risk can be taken out of danger," he said.

A Hackney Council spokesperson agreed that more cash should be injected into refuges and the safe-house system.

"It is a very difficult problem to deal with. What it really needs is government funding to provide proper services. We would like to provide more services, but along with other urgent items we just don't have the money," he said.



WPC Sonia Corfe.



WPC Karen Wren.

HC 12.10.90

Cops wage war on Hackney locals

EAST London police officers are accused of having declared war on Hackney's community following a spate of incidents last week.

A PUB brawl on Chatsworth Road led to a contingency of officers from the Territorial Support Group (TSG) – identifiable by their 'E' numbers – embarking on, what independent witnesses describe as, a rampage, against any civilian they found in the vicinity of the incident, including observers who had no other involvement other than their presence at the scene

of the disturbance.

One man who said he only left his house because of the commotion he heard outside claims he was dragged into a van and severely beaten. The man already has a civil complaint pending against Stoke Newington police for serious injuries he alleges he received whilst in their custody illegally four years ago.



The behaviour of Hackney police officers continues to attract headlines

"People claim that the Hackney Community Defence Association (HCDA) is made up of agitators and troublemakers but we are simply local folk who felt it was time we responded to incidents such as the deaths of Colin Roach, Tunay Hassan, Michael Ferreira and Aseta Simms in police custody and all the people who complained about the behaviour of the east London police. We would wish any of our detractors who get a chance to look into these cases to honestly tell us we should ignore what seems to be the everyday tale of commonplace police brutality in Hackney," a spokesperson for the HCDA

STOKE Newington officers have also received admonishment for their alleged role in the injuries received by a man who was first told he was being arrested for being in possession of a stolen car.

The man finally had all charges quashed after investigations revealed the car was his after all. However, he claims the broken nose, cut to his right retina, bruises to his back and legs and cut wrists due to the prolonged length of time he spent wearing handcuffs, were all received

by courtesy of PC GH242.

"When they first called to me I ran because the way they approached me led me to believe it was the National Front," said the man. "Once I heard them say they were police I decided that I would stop and see what they wanted."

Mistake

"That was my first mistake," he stated.

Stoke Newington's Chief Inspector Roy Clarke told *Caribbean Times* that he could not comment on the case as it was under investigation.

A LARGE police presence has made itself felt on the Clapton Park estate following what has been described as a "police riot" last Monday evening.

The tension surrounding a drugs possession bust exacerbated when the two officers holding a youth radioed for reinforcements.

After the arrival of some ten additional officers the youth was hurled to the ground and four other officers grabbed hold of his brother who may have been deemed to be standing too close. The boys' mother also suf-

fered injuries which she claimed were administered by the heavy-handed police.

One witness told *Caribbean Times*: "She came out and said, 'It's alright, you have him now you don't need to be so rough' and two officers just spun on her. I saw one officer kick her as they dragged her into the van."

During the incident reinforcements swarmed the square, including squads from Bow Road, Old Street, Walthamstow and also members of the TSG with dogs and threateningly abusive

language.

Hysterical

"I saw one young girl become hysterical after an officer told her that he and his comrades were getting their own back to avenge PC Lawrence Brown," said one witness in reference to the young officer who was shot dead last month only a few dozen yards away from the estate.

A Scotland Yard spokesman told *Caribbean Times* that the reinforcements were called in because the 'crowd' had become abusive and threatening.

CARIBBEAN TIMES

16.10.90



Posties back mayor's bid to help murdered bobby's daughter

Laurence Brown appeal gets a special delivery

POSTMEN delivered a donation of £100 to the fund set up for the baby daughter of murdered City Road policeman, Laurence Brown, on Friday.

The money was collected in a special whip-round by postmen at the Royal Mail's Emma Street sorting office in Bethnal Green.

Making the presentation were postmen Stan Fuller and Stephen Martin whose delivery round includes Orwell Court in Pownall Road, Haggerston, where the 27-year-old copper was shot dead two months ago on a routine call to a car theft.

Superintendent David Hynes from City Road police station and appeal fund organiser Betty Shanks gratefully accep-

ted the donation, which will be added to the £4,000 already raised towards a nest-egg for six-month-old Emma.

"Laurence Brown's widow, Janet, will receive financial assistance from the criminal injuries board and police benevolent fund, but little Emma will get nothing for her future so we decided to start the fund," said Betty Shanks.

"We have been overwhelmed by the response and the generosity of Hackney people, and this collection by the postmen is a demonstration of how deeply the public care."

Mr Hynes thanked the postmen and everyone who had contributed so far.

"We are extremely appreciative and, on behalf of Pc Brown's widow, I want to thank everybody who has given money to the appeal."

Special fund-raising events are still being organised to boost the fund further. One of those is a sponsored absceel down a tall building by appeal fund organiser, Betty Shanks.

"I plan to enlist the help of the Territorial Army who will supply the ropes and equipment," she said, "but at the moment I'm still looking for a suitable building." A grand fund-raising raffle in aid of the Emma Brown appeal is being held at the Fox pub on the corner of Middleton Road and Kingsland Road, Dalston, on October 30.

"I'm hoping shops and businesses will donate gifts as prizes and they can drop them off at my home at 29 Broke Road, Haggerston or bring them to the youth and community section at Stoke Newington police station," added Betty.

Plasterer plans to sue police

A PLASTERER is planning to sue Stoke Newington police after claiming four officers left him with a broken nose and a damaged eye.

Stephen Lewis, 26, had gone for a run just after 1.30 in the early hours of last Tuesday morning, but he says that as he was running across Hackney Downs four officers began chasing him.

Once they caught up with him they allegedly threw him over a six-foot fence before bundling him into a police van and taking him to Stoke Newington police station, where he was held for 12 hours.

Family man

Mr Lewis, who lives on the Trowbridge Estate, Hackney Wick, with his wife and three small children, said: "I'm a family man. I've never been in any trouble with the police and then this happens. I can't believe it."

"I don't think I'll be able to go to work for some time. I can't work with just one eye and the hospital say I'll be putting drops in my eye for a month." His case has been taken up by the Hackney Community Defence Association.

Chief Supt Roy Clark of Stoke Newington police said: "This man was detained and has made a formal complaint against the police officers, some of whom were injured themselves." The complaint has been passed onto the area complaints department, he added.

New legal rights scheme launched

THE songs of Bob Marley, Ella Fitzgerald and Bob Dylan will be helping to launch a new scheme to fight for justice from the courts and police.

Hackney prisoners' rights campaigner, Gloria Van Coolen, will be using "Stand Up For Your Rights" by Bob Marley, Ella Fitzgerald's version of "You Got a Friend" and "Blowing in the Wind" by Bob Dylan to herald PAID - People Against Injustice and Disparity.

The songs will be played at the start of every PAID meeting at Roots Pool Development Agency, Arcola Street, Dalston, from January, to give people a sense of solidarity, according to Mrs Van Coolen.

PAID intends to investigate complaints of unjust treatment while in custody, monitor lawyers, magistrates and judges, make potential jurors aware of the shortcomings of the legal system and lobby for a "truly independent" police complaints system.

Campaigners accuse police of heavy-handed response

A MINOR incident on Clapton Park Estate could have developed into a serious disorder because of the over-the-top reactions of Hackney police, campaigners have claimed.

Estate workers and local people are furious at the incident which took place on Monday last week in Gilpin Square.

A Pc and Wpc had stopped a man for possession of drugs at about 8.30pm when members of his family came out of their home and tried to stop him being arrested.

The two officers called for reinforcements and within minutes dog handlers and four vans of riot squad officers from as far away as Walthamstow were on the scene, it is claimed.

The square was soon packed with a crowd of about 200 police and local people who had come out to see what was going on, eyewitnesses claim. Four people were charged with obstruction.

Graham Smith of Hackney Community Defence Association said: "It was totally unnecessary. The response was as if it was a riot situation. It was completely over the top."

"That sort of fire brigade policing - simply reacting to incident by flooding the area with officers - is more likely to provoke a situation."

He paid tribute to the local people on the estate who showed restraint during the incident, which comes at a time when the relationship between police

and some local people has hit rock bottom.

Supt Tom Williamson of Hackney police confirmed that the tensions on the estate are running high, adding that he has met with community leaders and local councillors since the incident to help improve relations.

But he denied that the police reaction was over-the-top "I was concerned about what happened," he said. "I am satisfied that our response was reasonable."

The incident follows a number of situations in which local people have attempted to stop police carrying out arrests in the area, he said. "I am not prepared to let Gilpin Square become a no go area," he added.

Police vow compassion and courtesy

John Carvel
Home Affairs Editor

POLICE forces yesterday responded to growing public dissatisfaction by promising to adopt a more compassionate and courteous attitude.

A document published yesterday by the Association of Chief Police Officers marks a shift in emphasis from law enforcement towards a concept of "re-assurance policing".

Officers will have to be compassionate, courteous, patient, unprejudiced, professional, calm and restrained, as laid down in a statement of common purpose. Chief constables admitted that they had set the wrong priorities in the past.

The strategy was launched at a conference at Bramshill police college in Hampshire with support from all the county forces in England and Wales and the Commission for Racial Equality.

David Waddington, the Home Secretary, said: "This single document does provide a vital benchmark against which it will be possible to judge the ser-

vice's progress, and it also gives the service a marvellous opportunity to seize the initiative with the public."

Local communities will be consulted on such problems as noise, graffiti, litter and the misuse of highways and footpaths. Officers will be encouraged to think of themselves as a police service and will be told to seek satisfaction for their "customers".

Association leaders said the objectives did not imply that resources would be shifted out of work such as traffic management and crime detection, although they believed the public was relatively untroubled by crime clear-up rates.

THE new code says: The purpose of the police is to uphold the law fairly and firmly; to prevent crime; to pursue and bring to justice those who break the law; to keep the Queen's Peace; to protect, help and reassure the community; and to be seen to do all this with integrity, common sense and sound judgment. We must be compassionate, courteous and patient, acting without

The time needed for officers to give more compassion and consideration to the public would come from extra manpower or a redistribution of working hours, said Sir John Dellow, deputy commissioner of the Metropolitan Police.

Michael Hirst, chief constable of Leicestershire and chairman of the committee which drew up the code, said there would be negotiable and non-negotiable aspects of police work.

"It is facile to suggest if there is a murder or rape or burglary that we should be negotiating with the community whether we should investigate those offences," he said.

"If we do nothing, given the

prospect of rising crime and finite resources, this will over time result in increased emphasis on enforcement and reactive policing which will further undermine our public credibility." He said the result would be confrontational policing.

Under the code, the police will monitor customer satisfaction through local questionnaires, analysis of complaints and consultation with community groups. The Home Office is considering regular national surveys.

The code also says racist and sexist behaviour within forces must be effectively discouraged.

Michael Day, chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality, said it was the most positive statement by the police in 10 years.

"The raw edge of racism lies between the police and young black people in our cities. If that is sensitively and imaginatively managed, the efforts in so many other places stand a real chance of success," he said.

GUARDIAN

24.10.90

Council's shock U-turn to join police watchdog

HACKNEY Council did an amazing U-turn this week, when it announced it will sit on the local police watchdog group after all.

Labour councillors have snubbed the Police Community Consultative Group ever since its formation three years ago, claiming it was undemocratic, unaccountable and unrepresentative.

They refused to take up the seats reserved for them and boycotted meetings. Labour group leader, Cllr John McCafferty, announced the shock turnaround at a full meeting of Hackney Council at the Town Hall on Wednesday night. But he stressed there were two conditions that needed to be met first:

- That representation on the consultative group would be as Hackney Council rather than as individual councillors.
- Talks have to take place on the sum-ber of seats to be made available to them - including the two formerly reserved for the now-defunct ILEA.

"We still hold the view that it is unjust and unfair that London doesn't have a

by STEWART FOWLER

democratic body to which the police are accountable," said Cllr McCafferty.

"But we want to nail once and for all the myth that Hackney Council doesn't co-operate with the police."

"We have got, and have had for some time, a number of informal contacts and meetings with the police. This decision will formalise that."

"And we hope that our joining will bring in a lot of other groups, such as pensioners' associations and Hackney Council for Racial Equality, to make the consultative group more representative than it currently is."

The turn-around has been warmly welcomed by opposition parties, the borough's police, and the consultative group itself.

Tory leader, Cllr Joe Lobenstein, said: "This U-turn is because they have got rid of some of their headbangers on the 'loony left' of the party, and come to realise that the people of this borough are looking to the council to do something posi-

tive to stem the rising tide of crime."

"The consultative group has done some very useful work since its establishment."

Hackney's top cop, Chief Superintendent Niall Mulvihill, said: "I am delighted that they have decided to take up their place on the consultative group. It is something I have been encouraging them to do for more than three years."

The police could be in for a rough time with the new make-up of the watchdog group. Council chiefs say they won't shrink from criticising policing in the borough, particularly after the recent murder of two Asian shopkeepers in the Lower Clapton Road.

"No arrests have yet been made for those murders," said Cllr McCafferty, "and we have a right to ask why not, and if the police are doing everything in their power to pursue those criminals."

"We want to give the consultative group some teeth, and have a duty to raise issues that local people are concerned with - such as street crime, burglaries, hard drug abuse, violence to women and racial harassment."

Crimebusters!



A GROUP of Girl Guides felt the long arm of the law at Stoke Newington police station last Saturday.

But the Guides hadn't suddenly turned into reckless lawbreakers or juvenile delinquents - and there was no need to slap the handcuffs on either, since the long arm of the law was only there to pin badges on their uniforms.

Chief Supt Roy Clark, Stoke Newington's new top cop, had one of his more pleasant duties to perform. The

youngsters, from the 7th Stoke Newington Girl Guides, had all won crime prevention badges after an intensive three-week course in beating the burglars and tackling crime.

But star of the presentation was Alex Manning, who proudly received her Baden Powell badge, the highest award a Guide can achieve - and then only after years of dedicated work.

The group meet every week in Bourville Road, Stoke Newington.

Police move to calm reprisal fears

HACKNEY'S top cops have stepped in to reassure witnesses to violent crime that they have nothing to fear from reprisals.

Some witnesses are often too frightened to come forward and give evidence, the Police and Community Consultative Group heard on Thursday of last week at a meeting at Roots Paul Community Centre off Arcola Street, Dalston.

But people who fear they may become the victims of revenge attacks were reassured by one of Hackney's top cops, Chief Supt Roy Clark.

He explained that witnesses can remain anonymous, even when they appear in court.

"If the victim or witness is keen their address is not revealed, that can be arranged," he said. "Obviously the address must be given to the police and the Crown Prosecution Service, but that doesn't have to be included on statements to solicitors or the court."

"This has always been possible, but we are making it more widely known in response to concerns raised by the public."

He added that the known number of revenge attacks is virtually nil.

Teenager drove at police after buying car from TV star

A TEENAGER from De Beauvoir bought a gleaming red BMW from EastEnders' star Sid Owen and later drove it at two policemen who tried to stop him, the Old Bailey heard on Tuesday.

Jason Pickles, 19, bought the D-reg car from Owen, who plays mechanic Ricky in the show, for £4,200, the court was told.

Two police officers who knew he was wanted for failing to answer a drug charge waved him down to stop, said Recorder Michael Gale, QC.

But Pickles reversed at speed and then drove straight towards the officers. He caused them to dive for safety and it was a grave matter, the judge added.

Pickles, of Herford Road, was sentenced to six months at a young offenders' institution when convicted of reckless driving. He was banned for two years. The jury cleared him of attempting to cause grievous bodily harm to the officers, Pc Ashfaq Siddique, 22, and Det Const Barry Costello, 32.

The court heard that the car windscreen was shattered when Pc Siddique threw his radio through it and stop Pickles.

The court heard that

Driver was wanted on drugs charge

Pickles was arrested after a wild 60mph chase.

He had stopped at traffic lights in Barnsbury Road, Islington when the police pulled up alongside in an unmarked car. An officer recognised him and he was told to stay where he was.

As the officers approached the car he reversed at speed in clouds of smoke from the tyres. He then drove towards the officers on the wrong side of the road at about 60mph.

Defence counsel Ernie Money said Pickles, who also admitted a charge of possessing a small quantity of cannabis, was deeply sorry.

As a result of his court appearance he was unlikely to offend again.

Kurds plan to sue police after picket line rumpus

FOUR Kurdish refugees are planning to sue the police, alleging they were beaten up by officers who tried to break up a picket outside a Stoke Newington clothing factory.

The four men say they were thrown into a van and beaten up after members of Bow's Terrorism Support Group broke up the picket outside Bickon Fashion, in Sarnford Grove.

The men - Sendar Gocuk, 19, and Haydar Gocuk, 26, who both live in Hackney Downs, Tekin Kartel, 22, from Woodford Green and Rizvan Sakar, of South Tottenham - announced their decision last week.

They decided to take the action after they were acquitted at Southend Crown Court on charges of assaulting police and riotous behaviour.

At the demonstration outside the factory in February, they say, a group of TSG officers from Bow attacked the picket.

Islington North MP Jeremy Corbyn, who has backed the four men's campaign, said: "I am delighted these men have been freed. It's a victory for the trade unionists and workers' organisations."

A spokesperson from Hackney Trade Union Support Unit added:

"The four men are all slightly anxious about taking action, but they feel the officers responsible shouldn't be able to get away with this."

They are also considering calling for a public inquiry into the actions of the TSG members, he added.

A Sarnford Yard spokesperson said the Metropolitan Police legal department would wait to hear from the men's solicitors.

Police crackdown on prostitutes

VICE girls in Stamford Hill could find themselves picking up some unwanted punters in the next few weeks - plain-clothed policemen!

The long arm of the law is about to come down hard on the borough's prostitutes and pluggers with extra police patrols targeting the notorious Amhurst Park area. Residents fear that the problem is getting worse.

Stoke Newington's Chief Supt Roy Clark, said: "We will be co-ordinating our efforts with the Tottenham police to arrest prostitutes and kerb-crawlers."

Number of assaults on police increases

by STEWART FOWLER

IN THE same week that Hackney's top cop revealed a horrifying increase in the number of violent attacks on police officers, a local police watchdog group has called for a public inquiry into police assaults on members of the public.

The call for a top-level probe into alleged malpractice, which has angered senior police chiefs, highlights the ever-widening rift between some sections of the community and the police.

It comes at a time when police officers can virtually expect to be attacked as part of their job. In a recent

10-day period, 25 officers were kicked, punched, bitten and scratched as they patrolled the streets - and those are just the figures for Stoke Newington police station!

One 21-year-old constable, Pc David Townsend, is still in a hospital bed six months after he was chased by a mob and battered unconscious with his own truncheon. He had tried to arrest a man who jumped a red traffic light in a car.

And Pc Colin Watson, 31, is to receive a special commendation for bravery after he chased a burglary suspect despite being stabbed three times

in the chest and back by the man. His liver was nearly sliced in half in the brutal attack, which happened last year.

Chief Superintendent Roy Clark, Stoke Newington's top cop, said: "Assaults on officers are becoming more frequent. It is accepted as part of the job, and weapons are rarely used in these attacks, thank God."

"I am appalled that officers trying to make an arrest should be subjected to violent attacks, and may be seriously injured as a consequence."

But watchdog group, Hackney Community Defence Campaign (HCDA), also released figures showing a 100 per cent increase in the number of cases brought to them this year.

Out of a total of 51 cases, arising from 32 separate incidents, HCDA say 25 involved people assaulted by the police, nine needing hospital treatment.

And 12 people have begun civil actions against the police, and the Police Complaints Authority is investigating three of the cases.

Graham Smith, of HCDA, said: "Something is very wrong, and we want a public inquiry into Hackney's policing."

"We have made this call repeatedly, but the police just dismiss criticism. Despite the public statements of senior police officers, policing on the ground is getting worse."



● Pc Colin Watson, who is to receive a bravery award after chasing a burglary suspect despite being stabbed three times.

Victim criticises delay in police disciplinary hearing

Met officers guilty over pub beating

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

SEVEN Metropolitan police officers were yesterday found guilty by an internal Scotland Yard inquiry of discreditable conduct arising from an incident in an east London pub three years ago when a man was beaten up.

The victim's lawyer last night criticised the delay in hearing the case.

Gary Stretch, aged 27, a driver from Hoxton, east London, was in The Limes public house in Hackney with friends on November 5, 1987.

A group of off-duty officers from City Road in east London was also drinking in the pub. There was an exchange of words around closing time between one officer and another man after which a fight broke out.

Mr Stretch, who had not heard what was said, was attacked by the off-duty officers and hit over the head with a broken beer glass, which partially severed his ear. He was then dragged out of the pub and kicked unconscious.

He was taken to the London Hospital by uniformed officers who arrived from Bethnal Green. The off-duty officers ran off but returned later.

Mr Stretch had his ear stitched back on in hospital. He was released after a week.

The pub barmaid, Joanne Legg, and Mr Stretch's father, Edward, made formal complaints against the police.

The Police Complaints Authority supervised an investigation by Scotland Yard's complaints investigation officers.

The off-duty officers, Alan Barr, Paul Caddy, Paul Wells, Peter Clissold, Carl Simon, Simon Haw and David Thompson, insisted on their right to silence, did not make statements and were suspended on full pay.

A year later, the authority forwarded the case papers to the Director of Public Prosecutions, which eventually decided not to bring charges against any of the officers. The case papers were returned to Scotland Yard for an internal disciplinary board hearing.

After two delays, following appeals by the officers to the High Court that the disciplinary hearing should not proceed because of the delay, the hearing began on October 1.



Gary Stretch: hit over head with a broken beer glass

The closed hearing, held in the offices of the Complaints Investigation Bureau at Tintagel House, south London, lasted for four weeks. Around 25 witnesses gave evidence to the three-man board, which consisted of one senior Metropolitan officer and two civilian members of the authority. The press were not given access. Mr Stretch's father and Ms Legg attended.

Mr Stretch's solicitor, Raju Bhatt, last night criticised the long delay and the secrecy surrounding the case.

He also expressed concern that the Director of Public Prosecutions had not brought a prosecution.

"The result begs the question as to why the DPP did not think the evidence sufficient to bring charges. They spent 12 months sitting on the report. Gary has gone through a lot more than was necessary. The hearings were in secret and although he was there, he was not allowed a lawyer with him."

Mr Stretch is bringing a civil claim for damages against the police.

He said: "I feel cheated at the length of time I waited and that the hearing was not publicly reported. I feel it should have gone in front of a jury. The evidence was strong enough."

"After all this time, it seems a bit of an anti-climax. I was cross-examined by four QCs and at times I felt as though I was the accused, not the victim."

Scotland Yard confirmed that seven officers had been found guilty of the disciplinary charges. Recommendations for possible further action are being passed to the Commissioner.

GUARDIAN

31.10.90

Police facing more violence

SHOCK figures reveal a horrifying increase in the number of violent attacks on police officers - which means that coppers can virtually expect to be attacked as part of their job.

And this ironically coincides with a local police watchdog group calling for a public inquiry into police assaults on members of the public.

The demand for an investigation into alleged malpractice - which has angered senior police chiefs - highlights the ever widening rift between some sections of the community and the police.

It comes at a time when attacks on police are on the increase. In a recent 10 day period, 25 officers were kicked, punched, bitten and scratched as they patrolled the streets - and those are just the figures for Stoke Newington nick.

One, 23-year-old constable, Pc David Townsend, is still lying in a hospital bed six months after he was chased by a mob and battered unconscious with his own truncheon. He had tried to arrest a man who jumped a red traffic light in a car.

And Pc Colin Watson, 31, is to receive a special commendation for bravery after he chased a burglary suspect despite being stabbed three times in the

chest and back by the man.

Chief Supt Roy Clark, Stoke Newington's new top cop, said: "Assaults on officers are becoming more frequent. It is accepted as part of the job, and weapons are rarely used in these attacks, thank God."

But watchdog group, Hackney Community Defence Campaign (HCDA), also released figures showing a 100 per cent increase in the number of cases they have dealt with this year.

Out of a total of 51 cases, arising from 32 separate incidents, HCDA say 25 involved people assaulted by the police, nine needing hospital treatment.

HACKNEY ECHO

31. 10. 90

Seven police recommended for dismissal after pub attack

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

SEVEN Metropolitan Police officers have been recommended for dismissal for their discreditable conduct in connection with an attack on a man in an east London pub three years ago, Scotland Yard announced yesterday.

An internal disciplinary tribunal returned a guilty verdict on the seven on Tuesday, and has passed its recommendation to the commissioner. The decision will be made by Sir John Dellow, the deputy commissioner, as the commissioner, Sir Peter Imbert, is recovering from a heart attack.

The seven — Alan Barr, Paul Caddy, Paul Wells, Peter Clissold, Carl Simon, Simon Haw, and David Thompson — are all constables from City Road station in east London. They were found guilty at a closed

hearing after evidence had been heard about their behaviour in The Limes pub, Hackney, on November 5, 1987.

Gary Stretch, then aged 24, was attacked with a beer glass and severely beaten up. His father, Edward Stretch, and the pub barmaid, Joanne Legg, made a complaint about the behaviour of the seven, who were off-duty and had been drinking in the pub.

On the basis of an initial investigation the Director of Public Prosecutions decided there was insufficient evidence to prosecute; the Police Complaints Authority then supervised an investigation by Scotland Yard's Complaints Investigation Bureau.

Mr Stretch, now working as a driver, is bringing a civil action for damages against the police.

The officers have been suspended on full pay for three years. They were represented at the tribunal by four QCs.

GUARDIAN

2.11.90

After three years, Scotland Yard tribunal

finds seven Pcs guilty of pub attack

SEVEN City Road coppers face the sack after being found guilty of a savage attack on 27-year-old Gary Stretch, who was slashed with a broken beer glass and kicked unconscious while drinking in The Limes pub in Hackney Road in 1987.

An internal disciplinary hearing by Scotland Yard, held in secret with the Press and public barred, came to the decision on Tuesday.

But, despite the guilty finding, Gary is far from happy. "I've spent three years living with the trauma of that attack," he said, "and it will be with me for the rest of my life."

"Those policemen should have faced criminal charges. I believe there was enough evidence to convict them in front of a jury. Although I feel vindicated, I want everyone to know what a whitewash the whole process has been."

It is nearly three years to the day since the vicious pub brawl, in which the off-duty coppers smashed a beer glass in Gary's face, partly severing his ear, dragged him outside and kicked him senseless. They then ran off, leaving the 16-year-old driver in a pool of blood, but returned later.

An investigation by the Police Complaints Authority followed, but the seven constables insisted on their right to silence and were suspended on full pay. Later, the Director of Public Prosecutions decided not to press criminal charges against any of the officers.

At the disciplinary hearing, four top barristers represented the constables - Paul Wells, Alan Barr, Paul Caddy, Peter Clossold, Carl Simon, Simon Hlaw and David Thompson - but Gary was not allowed a lawyer at all.

Wrong

"I was treated more like the accused than the victim," he said. "It's wrong that anyone should go through that, especially behind closed doors."

"I was in hospital for a week and off work sick for two-and-a-half years, while the policemen received over £250,000 in wages between them. I've only been given a taste of justice and I am continuing with a civil action for compensation."

He praised police watchdog group, Hackney Community Defence Association, for their help and support. "There were times when I felt I just wanted to give up," he said, "but they gave me the strength to go on."

The seven City Road coppers are appealing against the tribunal's decision and Hackney's top cop, Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill, was reluctant to comment.

But he admitted: "This has been a running sore for three years. Naturally, I am concerned that several years ago seven of my officers were involved in an incident."

"I regret all aspects of the case, specifically the effects that an isolated incident such as this can have on the police, and I also have sympathy for Mr Stretch."

"The tribunal recommended that they should be dismissed and we will have to wait and see whether the Commissioner endorses those findings."

'KICK THEM

ALL OUT'

by
STEWART
FOWLER

Police admit it's the tip of the iceberg

Crackdown on racial attacks

POLICE are cracking down on race attacks in the borough, but admit that the incidents reported to them are "just the tip of the iceberg."

A new scheme was launched at Hackney police station yesterday (Thursday) to get to grips with the problem. Latest figures reveal that so far this year there have been 108 incidents reported to the police - the same number as for the whole of 1989, which were double the figures for the previous year.

The scheme, which has been running for a two-month test period at Stoke Newington police station, means that ANY incident with a possible racial motive - from verbal abuse to serious assaults - will be recorded as a crime and investigated.

But police deny that race attacks are necessarily on the increase. They put the rise in the statistics down to the fact that more people are prepared to report attacks, that the police themselves take them more seriously than before and that there is a growing awareness of what can be done to prevent harassment.

Inspector Paul Wotton, from Stoke Newington's Youth and Community section, said: "We now have a higher profile regarding racial incidents and a priority commitment to investigate them than was perhaps the case in the past."

Awareness

"There is a growing awareness in the community of how we are able to help, and an empathy from police officers towards the people reporting these matters."

"Our definition of a 'racial' incident is where the victim or the witness or the police officer perceives a racial motive to it."

"Sometimes it is difficult to identify the person causing the harassment, but if we do find the person then action can be taken. Some incidents will be referred to the housing authority to deal with, and all that is needed in some others is advice to all parties."

"But I am aware that racial incidents are being under-re-

by STEWART
FOWLER

Training scheme planned for would-be helpers

Volunteers plea by crime victim support scheme

by STEWART
FOWLER

VOLUNTEERS are desperately needed to help out Hackney's victim support scheme, which gives advice and comfort to anyone who is on the receiving end of a crime - whether it's burglary, a mugging, or worse.

The scheme has just brought out its annual report, which shows 2,780 people were referred to them for help in the past year.

Although that's over six per cent down on the year before, it's not because the crime rate's going down - but because for three months there was only an emergency service available while the scheme moved to new offices at 70 Mare Street, Hackney.

Chairman James Williams said:

"Crime, we thought, was going into a recession, but that was only a dream. We have witnessed three murders within the space of a few months and also the appalling murder of Pc Laurence Brown."

Community organisation

"It is my hope that people will come forward as volunteers and help us to help others when crime rips a hole in their lives. Victim support is a community organisation and we need the support of the community to make it work."

On Monday a training course for volunteers begins, along with neighbouring

Tower Hamlets' victim support scheme, at the Salvation Army centre in Mare Street.

Volunteers would take seven evening courses and two Saturdays on counselling skills, the effects of crime, practical help and advice-giving, the criminal justice system and racial awareness.

Inspector Ian Jamieson, from Hackney police station, said: "The victims of any crime frequently need practical help and support to get over what is sometimes a shocking experience."

"The local victim support scheme has continued to go from strength to strength and is providing an immensely valuable service for victims of crime in Hackney."

Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer should phone 081-533 5352

HG 2.11.90

'A multi-agency approach is the best way to tackle disorder'

Double-pronged attack on crime

HE launch last week of a crime prevention blueprint for the borough demonstrated the new spirit of co-operation between Hackney Council and the police.

Town hall chiefs and Hackney's top cops signalled a new dawn in the once icy relationship by publicly pledging to slip combat crime together.

It follows the council's recent decision to sit on the borough's police watchdog group after boycotting it for the past three years.

Co-operation between the police, the community and the local authority is the key to beating crime. That was the message of the joint 22-page document entitled 'Crime Prevention: The Partnership Approach,' drawn up in response to a Home Office request for details of ways to reduce crime.

Hackney Council leader John McCafferty pointed to the success of co-operative measures.

"The council is committed to working closely with the local police," he said. "The 'Let Street Bright' Project, for example, was co-ordinated by our Police Research Unit."

"They arranged a seminar between police and council officers to identify particular parts of the borough with high levels of crime and inadequate street lighting."

"The council could then use this information, plus the results of a public survey, to target street lighting improvements where they are needed most."

Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill, from Hackney and City Road police station, and Chief Supt Roy Clarke, from Stoke Newington police station, re-affirmed their commitment to consultation and co-operative working.

"We are pleased that the council is seeking to join Hackney's Police Community Consultative Group," said Chief Supt Mulvihill, "as this will strengthen

and formalise the links which already exist."

Chief Supt Clarke added: "A multi-agency approach is the best way to combat the problem of drugs to take but one example."

"We are keen to work closely with the council and other agencies to beat crime."

by RUSS LAWRENCE



● Signing the joint submission are council chief executive Jerry White, council leader John McCafferty, Chief Supt Roy Clarke and Chief Supt Niall Mulvihill.

Does this mean full support for police?

I READ with some scepticism the Gazette story (October 26 issue) about Hackney Council's U-turn in joining the Police Community Consultative Group, and wonder what their motives are considering it has taken three years to do an about-turn after constant prompting from our Cllr Joe Lobenstein and the Conservative group.

On October 24, I sat in a meeting of the council in the Town Hall and listened to the leader, Cllr John McCafferty, outline his conditions of entry, his intentions and ambitions which amounted to the council having overall control of the consultative group.

His speech brought to mind the council's own Police Committee and the Hackney Community Defence Association, both of which have shown their anti-police and anti-establishment attitudes. I could not help but remember the CPC's vigorous opposition to the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme and, of course, the council's backing and support to the HCDA.

Will Cllr McCafferty now tell us if the council is really doing a U-turn? Or is this yet another ploy to flex their muscles against our police? If the council are serious about fighting crime in Hackney, will they withdraw their support for the CPC and HCDA groups and put a representative of the council on the PCCG for them to report back to their leader? And would he

go on record saying that he and his council will give full and unconditional support, co-operation and assistance to our police in their fight against the soaring crime rate we have here in Hackney?

Then, and only then, will the decent hard-working people of Hackney believe his motives. — PHIL McCULLOUGH, CONSERVATIVE PARTY CHAIRMAN, SPRINGFIELD WARD.

Civil rights group probe fascism in new Europe

HOW the black community respond to the rise of fascism in Europe when trade barriers are broken down in 1992 is the subject of Tower Hamlets MP Mildred Gordon's speech to the annual meeting of civil rights watchdog Capa on Tuesday.

Tottenham MP Bernie Grant will be speaking on what a single market in 1992 will mean for black people, immigrants and refugees, with special reference to policing and the treatment of young people.

Capa is a Tower Hamlets-based community organisation which offers support and advice in the areas of racial violence and harassment to the black communities in Tower Hamlets.

The meeting takes place at Dame Colet House, Ben Jonson Road, Stepney, at 7pm.

Ugly band at benefit gig

Cuckoos clock in for Chats bash

THE superbly named Dik Ugly Ensemble join the Cuckoo Club and those Kalashnikov's of Hackney rock and roll, the AK 47's, at a benefit gig for Hackney Community Defence Association at Chats Palace in Homerton.

The bands have joined together to raise cash for HCDA after the Cuckoo Club's bassist, Chas Loft, was one of the people they helped after arrests during the Mare Street police

tax demo in March.

He was subsequently acquitted but the band are so grateful for the help that HCDA have given other people they want to say thanks with cash.

HCDA say they will be using the money to finance their annual 'We Remember' march in January, which commemorates deaths and injuries in police custody in Hackney.

The Cuckoo Club all live in Hackney and Chas describes their music, featuring violin and keyboards, as a fusion of The Fall, the Smiths and

Lush, with a certain hint of the otherworldliness of the Cocteau Twins.

The Dik Ugles are all from Sunderland but live in Dalston. Apart from having a great name they also write song titles like 'I've Got My Whisky for the Weekend And I'm Going Back to Bed.'

The music is described as "the Stranglers but faster," so you will have to make your own mind up down at Chats Palace in Brooksbys Walk on Thursday. The show starts at 8.30 pm. Tickets £2.50.



Rock the Cuckoo Club (clockwise from bottom) Frank Jordan (violin), Milly Day (keyboard), Ben Jones (guitar), Ben Rosborough (drums) and Chas Loft.

HC 9.11.90

INSIDE STORY

One night in a pub, seven off-duty policemen beat up Gary Stretch. Three years passed before a tribunal found the officers guilty. The case has left bad feelings all round, write **Duncan Campbell** and **Martin J Walker**

THE Limes was one of those very Eighties East End pubs. Flash and glitzy, with loud music and "entertainers" — disc jockeys and strippers — aimed at the young men of Hackney with a few bob to spend.

On Guy Fawkes Night 1987, there were two groups at the pub. The first was part of an unofficial wake. They had been to the funeral of Elaine Dimitri, a young woman stabbed to death three months earlier whose burial had been held up by an inquest. Her brother, Nikki, and a group of his friends were in one part of the bar.

The other group was also young and all male: seven off-duty police constables from nearby City Road police station.

Also in the pub that night was Gary Stretch, a 24-year-old from Hoxton. He would pop into The Limes about once a week and on this occasion was with an old friend. Gary knew Nikki Dimitri but had not been to the funeral and felt awkward about joining the wake. The barmaid that night was Joanne Legg; with two groups buying from whip-rounds she was run off her feet.

Outside the pub, listening to his car radio and waiting for his wife to finish work, sat the husband of one of the pub strippers. He did not, as a rule, go into the pubs where she was working.

Gary Stretch was "known to the police". He had two previous convictions for actual bodily harm — one during a football match against a police team — and had served a prison sentence. His photograph was up in the police station across the road. But he had not been in trouble for three years and was now working regularly as a window cleaner. He got chatting to one of the funeral party.

Coincidentally, one of the young officers had been to school with one of the funeral party. When he spotted him drinking with Gary he asked: "What are you doing drinking with that flash, thieving cunt?" This was reported back to the funeral party.

One of Stretch's friends could see trouble coming. He suggested that Gary head into the toilet to avoid it. One of the police officers had apparently issued a warning that Stretch and anyone he was with had 30 seconds to get out of the pub or "get a booting". Stretch was puzzled. He went and sat down at a table with his friend.

"I was just sitting down when I got hit from behind. I didn't know what was happening," says Stretch. He had been hit with a pint glass, which partially severed his ear. He was punched to the floor and then dragged outside into the street. Then the boot went in.



THE VICTIM: Gary Stretch was known to the police. He had two previous convictions for actual bodily harm — one during a football match against a police team — and had served a prison sentence. His photograph was up in the police station across the road from the Limes pub. But he had not been in trouble for three years

PHOTOGRAPH: E. HAMILTON WEST

STRETCH MARKED

"I was lying there, my shirt and my jeans had been pulled off. I was just in my underpants and it was really cold. It was November. I couldn't understand what was happening."

The savagery of the beating Stretch was given shocked the stripper's husband, watching from his car. The crowd finally dispersed and Gary Stretch was carried back inside the pub. His attackers moved off.

"People in the pub tried to mop up the blood with a bar towel," says Stretch.

Uninformed police from Bethnal Green arrived. Stretch was put in a police van. The stripper asked: "What are you doing to him? He hasn't caused any trouble." She jumped into the van, too.

"I said, 'Don't hit me, don't hit me,' and a sergeant put his arm around me and said, 'Don't worry, no one is going to hit you.'" He was driven to the London Hospital. By now, Stretch had lost consciousness.

Stretch spent five days in hospital during which time his ear was stitched

up and his neck put in a brace.

Meanwhile, his father Eddie had been phoned by a friend who suggested he find their GP because they thought Gary was being held in a police station. Eddie Stretch phoned a policeman friend at Scotland Yard who advised him to make a complaint, advice he followed immediately. He was joined in the complaint by Joanne Legg, the barmaid, whose father was a policeman.

"My parents were thrown by it," says Gary. "My mother, who works for BP,

had always supported the police. When I was in trouble in the past with them she would say, 'You've been in trouble and now you've got to pay for it'. When this happened it was almost as if she was ashamed. There was my picture in the papers for having been beaten up and it was almost as though it was my fault. She felt embarrassed at work about it."

For the next three years the incident became the main talking point in the Stretch household.

"My father was very upset about it. It had an effect on the whole house. It became an angry house." So angry that Gary Stretch moved out for a while to Bournemouth.

The Metropolitan Police's complaints investigation branch force was called in. One of the investigating officers came round to see Gary and showed him a small silver knife. Was it his?

"I had never seen it before. Now they were saying that the police had had to take it off me because I went for them with a knife. It was unbelievable." Gary Stretch now feared that he might face a charge for assaulting the police. But the investigating officers appeared to believe him. The investigation continued.

In January 1989, the Director of Public Prosecutions announced that there would be no charges as there was insufficient evidence. The papers were returned to the police who decided to conduct an internal disciplinary hearing.

"I was disappointed. In fact, I wanted them to charge me because at least that meant that it would come out in court," says Stretch. But his father and Joanne Legg wanted the complaint to be pursued.

By May of this year the complaint had still not run its course.

The officers, who were all still suspended on full pay, instructed counsel to ask for the disciplinary charges against them to be thrown out on the grounds that so much time had elapsed between the incident and the convening of the tribunal and that this amounted to "abuse of process". The case, backed by the Police Federation, went to the High Court. The plea was rejected. The police officers' legal team then obtained an ex parte injunction to halt proceedings pending a judicial review. Mr Justice Popplewell however turned down their application for a review on the grounds that there were "no exceptional circumstances".

BY THIS time Gary Stretch was also becoming frustrated. "I felt like 'wiping my mouth' and forgetting about it," says Stretch. But the tribunal did finally go ahead. It was held in Tintagel House in south London, headquarters of the police internal investigation unit, CIB 2.

Stretch, his father and Joanne Legg attended. Worried that he might be subject to libel proceedings if the case against the police was not proved, Stretch asked if he could have a lawyer present. This was turned down. The hearings are private and cannot be reported. Stretch was warned that any notes he took could be taken off him.

"The first day I went in, there were these seven officers in uniform glaring at me," says Stretch. "You would see them in the gents and pass them in the corridor and I felt very vulnerable." The evidence went on, with some interruptions, for four weeks.

At last the day when the verdicts were due arrived.

"They looked really confident," says Stretch. "They were throwing sweets to each other and talking and laughing. I

don't think they could believe they would be found guilty.

"One of them got up and slung his jacket off and stormed out. He was in bits. I could hear one of them shouting and being quietened down by another officer. They couldn't believe it."

Gary, now working as a driver, did not feel like celebrating. "I feel cheated in a way in that it went to an internal inquiry and not to court. And that it took so long. If the same thing happened to someone else I would tell them to bring a private prosecution."

His father, Eddie, says now that he would not do the same again: "I wouldn't go through the same procedure again. The pressure on the family has been interminable. The police go on about the pressure on them but it was self-inflicted."

Joanne Legg agrees: "I wouldn't advise anyone to do it. I was cross examined for a whole day, they spat me out for breakfast. They asked a lot of horrible, irrelevant things."

The case is an example of what in some ways is a "successful" complaint. Seven police officers who misbehaved in a pub have been dismissed. It is the largest such dismissal and the most significant incident of its kind since the Holloway Road case ended in 1987 with officers guilty of assaulting four young men on their way back from a north London carnival.

But as far as the complainants are concerned, they feel there were many errors in the way the process operates:

they would have liked to have a legal representation throughout the hearing; they felt that the case could have been better presented — Gary Stretch did not brief the prosecuting counsel who was working for the Metropolitan Police and had to interrupt

to add details to the case; the press was not able to report the proceedings; the three-year delay meant that a cloud hung over the case.

The police officers might also argue that the delay did them no favours, they were in limbo for three years with a cloud of suspicion over them. Now they seem certain to lose their careers.

The total cost will not be less than £500,000. Quite an expensive night out in the pub.

The Police Complaints Authority, which was set up in 1985, recognises criticisms of the way they operate but argue that it is not up to them to make the decision to make changes. They processed a total of 11,155 complaints in 1989, most of them minor. They find themselves between the police ranks who feel they are hypercritical — "PCA" is sometimes said to stand for "Prosecute Coppers Always" — and the public who are unaware of their work or its difficulties.

On the secrecy of the process, the PCA position is that "it gives the appearance of being shrouded in mystery, which detracts from the credibility of the system".

The police defend the proceedings, saying that few professions punish their offenders more seriously. Those officers who lose their jobs, as the seven seem likely to, have that stigma hanging over them. On secrecy of hearings, they acknowledge that there may be a case to examine public hearings.

The Director of Public Prosecutions decided officers should not face a criminal trial. So we are left with dissatisfied complainants, angry police, uneasy Police Complaints Authority.

And how was it at The Limes this Guy Fawkes night? Very quiet. It has closed down. Something to do with the atmosphere? **Q**

Total cost will be £500,000 — an expensive night out



On your bike! Pc John Evans is pictured above on one of the stolen bicycles.

Pc makes on yer bike plea!

GET on your bike... and pedal it away from Stoke Newington police station - that's the message from coppers who have 21 bicycles including trendy mountain bikes cluttering up the nick's basement!

They want people who have had their bicycles stolen to come and see if they can identify them at the police station. Many of the bikes were recovered after police caught a man who had set up a racket of stealing the bikes and selling them to second-hand shops and dealers.

"We are eager to return these bikes to their owners," said Det Con Peter Walsh.

"It is almost impossible for us to find

the owners as although most of the bikes have serial numbers, none of them are cycle-coded - when bikes have the owner's post code and house number stamped on them it means we can track down the owners straight away."

And home beat officer Pc John Evans pointed out that with Christmas drawing near and many kiddies certain to get bikes as festive gifts, it was important to get them cycle-coded.

"We cycle-code bicycles between 10am and 11am every Saturday, but people have to phone up to make an appointment," said Pc Evans. If you want to get your bike stamped, contact the home beat office on 071 488 7178.

The magnificent seven



YO DUDES! These mean-looking lawkeepers rode into town on Tuesday, dust on their stetsons and sixguns in their belts.

The seven-strong posse, from the South Carolina County Sheriff's Department, couldn't bring their horses on the plane - but they brought their

cowboy boots, sheriff's stars and hardcore yankee accents!

The big John Wayne lookalikes from America's Deep South act tough, look tough and ARE tough! What's more, they've put a price on every baddie's head in the borough. The group are based at Hack-

ney police station all week and will be riding shotgun with the local cops when they go out and about on the streets.

They're all on a fact-finding tour of the borough, seeing how our police work and what they do differently compared to the US of A.

Police draw a blank in double killing

POLICE are no nearer catching the killers of two Bangladeshi men who were brutally stabbed as their young family looked on cowering in fear under a bed.

Esmoth Ali, 35, died from a single stab wound when a black man and a white man burst into his home in Flower and Dean Walk, Spitalfields, in July, 1989.

He bled to death on the doorstep before an ambulance could reach him.

Prester Waris Ali came to his uncle's aid when he heard the struggle. He received multiple stab wounds and died almost 12 months later after being on a life support machine in the London Hospital.

The attackers, armed with a knife and a handgun, terrorised Mr Waris Ali's family, beating his pregnant wife and children as they demanded cash.

Unlawful

At an inquest on Wednesday, Poplar Coroner Dr Douglas Chambers recorded a verdict of unlawful killing on Waris Ali.

Since the attack 50 detectives have been involved in tracking down the killers and Det Supt John Probert told the court that 1,344 separate inquiries had been made into the double killing.

He said nobody had been charged but that the evidence was periodically under review.

One theory was that the killers thought Esmoth Ali was banker for the Spitalfields' Bangladeshi population and helped them send money home.

The killers escaped empty-handed as there was no cash in the house.

Invited

Invited over by Hackney Wpc Tina Martin, on behalf of the International Association of Women Police Officers, they jumped at the chance.

On their home turf they deal with a burglary every two hours and a murder every 21 days - so Hackney probably feels like a holiday!

So, hey dudes - time to ride into the sunset!

Policeman still off work after attack with his own truncheon

Man jailed for assaulting Pc

A MAN who beat up a Stoke Newington policeman by repeatedly hitting him with the constable's own truncheon has been jailed for five years.

Pc David Townsend, 23, has spent the past six months off-duty recovering from the vicious attack, much of that time in consultation with a psychiatrist.

On Friday, homeless and jobless Paul Telfer, 24, was jailed after being told by Judge Jarrah Finney at Wood Green Crown Court: "People who assault police officers will go to prison for long periods of time."

Telfer - who gave himself up a few days after the attack after reading about it in the Hackney Gazette - admitted unlawfully wounding the young constable with intent to avoid arrest, and driving recklessly while disqualified on May 12.

Mr Andrew Marshall, prosecuting, told the court that Pc Townsend and a

Wpc stopped Telfer's car in Seven Sisters Road, Finsbury Park.

But when they got out of their van to talk to him he sped off, jumping two red traffic lights and narrowly missing other cars.

When Telfer was eventually stopped, Pc Townsend pulled out his truncheon and ordered him to lie on the ground. Telfer refused, and was suddenly joined by four by-standers who jostled the constable and encouraged Telfer to run off - which he did.

But the Stoke Newington copper gave chase and caught Telfer, who managed to grab the constable's truncheon during a struggle.

"Every time the officer tried to get up," said Mr Marshall, "he was hit on the head. The defendant shouted 'I'm going to kill you'."

As the constable lay covered in blood, his Wpc colleague ran towards the group swearing and shouting with her trun-

cheon raised. Telfer ran off, only to give himself up a few days later.

He admitted to police that at the time he had been drinking and smoking cannabis, and didn't want to be caught.

Giving evidence, Det Sgt John Lock said that Pc Townsend was due to return to work soon, but as a result of the attack had developed "a fear of people and a fear of police work."

Mr Andrew Williams, defending, said that Telfer "accepts that what he did was way over the top that night."

Judge Finney told Telfer, who has two previous convictions for causing police officers actual bodily harm, that "the injuries you inflicted were physically very serious. In addition, what you did to him has caused considerable psychiatric harm."

Telfer was jailed for four years for unlawful wounding, and for 12 months for driving while disqualified and driving recklessly.

HC

16-11-90

Hero plucks tot from flat blaze



● The scene of the fire in Kyverdale Road, Stoke Newington.



● Have-a-go hero Raphael Joseph - "It was impossible to see".

I couldn't just stand there and do nothing, says gutsy Raphael

by STEWART FOWLER

A HAVE-A-GO hero snatched a helpless tot from a flame and smoke-filled bedroom on Sunday afternoon.

And the brave man who risked his own life to save the 14-month-old boy was Raphael Joseph, the Stoke Newington businessman at the centre of allegations of police brutality.

He had just left his Stoke Newington Common home on Sunday afternoon when he spotted clouds of black smoke billowing from a nearby house in Kyverdale Road.

After running to the scene he found a near-hysterical woman in the road screaming "My baby is inside, my baby!" and a crowd of people standing around watching as flames leapt from the door and windows.

"I couldn't just stand there and do nothing," said Raphael, 52. "I have a two-year-old child myself, and knew how the mother must be feeling."

"Her husband and I grabbed a ladder and dragged it round to the back of the house, jumping over four garden walls to get there."

Thick smoke

"Then I climbed up to the top floor, smashed the window to a back bedroom, and clambered through."

"It was impossible to see anything because the smoke was so thick and choking, so I carefully felt my way around the room until I came to a cot, then grab-

bed the baby boy and handed him to his father waiting at the top of the ladder."

Little Nanak Singh was rushed to Hoxton Hospital where he was treated for smoke inhalation before being transferred to a children's ward at the Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel.

Nanak, whose parents and six sisters escaped the blaze unharmed, is now well on his way to a full recovery.

"I know I risked my life but I'd do it again without hesitation," said Raphael, who hit the headlines in July last year after claiming he was badly beaten up by police who arrested him for driving the wrong way down a one-way street.

After spending a week in intensive care and months recuperating from his injuries, he is still in the process of suing the police for compensation.

A CROWD of about 20 young Asians savagely attacked a defenceless white man and left him fighting for his life, the Old Bailey was told this week.

He was punched and kicked, beaten with iron bars, a tree branch and a baseball bat, and repeatedly stabbed.

The victim, Terence Swinney, 42, was driving with his wife and son when the windscreen was smashed by a brick. He got out of the car and became involved in an incident with Malik Miah, 17, who was knocked to the ground.

"The group of Asians then attacked Mr Swinney and he was hopelessly outnumbered," said Mr David Bate, prosecuting. "His arms were held so that he was helpless and Miah got up and stabbed him repeatedly in the face and body."

The crowd fled and Mr Swinney was saved by a "Good Samaritan." Four Asians, aged between 16 and 18, were accused of being involved in the attack.

Miah denies attempting to murder Mr Swinney and wounding him at Ben Jonson Road, Stepney, in February. Abdul Gofur, Abdul Alim and Abdul Ilalim plead not guilty to causing him grievous bodily harm. All deny violent disorder, except Gofur, who admits the charge.

Teenager attacked

The jury was told that the attack was one of several "racial incidents" in London's East End after a protest march by white parents to Morpeth Secondary School where a teenager had been stabbed.

The Swinney family had been on the march and were making their way home when their car was stopped.

Mr Swinney was left slumped on the pavement and his wife, who was still in the car, drove on to the pavement towards her husband's assailants and they ran away. "His condition on arrival at hospital was very serious and he was covered in blood from head to foot. The injuries were threatening his life," counsel said.

Three of the accused, Miah, Alim and Ilalim, were stopped by police searching the

Right-wingers in protest march

A MASSIVE police presence kept rival groups apart as about 200 members and supporters of the right-wing British National Party marched through Bethnal Green on Saturday afternoon shouting racist slogans and giving Nazi salutes.

The demo calling for "Rights for Whites" was heavily policed as it passed down Roman Road and ended in a rally at which speakers included the former leader of the National Front, John Tyndall. Rival anti-fascists staged a counter-march and the two were kept well apart.

The "Rights for Whites" march was organised in protest at the acquittal of eight Bangladeshi youths after the stabbing of 17-year-old white schoolboy John Stoner at Morpeth School last February.

area. Abdul Ilalim was seen to "shuffle his feet" and near his foot police found an orange Stanley knife. Miah was found to have the victim's blood on his clothing, Mr Bate added.

Gofur was arrested three days later and allegedly told police how the crowd had attacked the victim. "We all started hitting him, but I couldn't find anything to hit him with. I used my fists. Some had sticks, but I didn't see anybody stab him. I didn't see a knife or any blood."

● The trial continues.

Boxer wins £50,000 from police



● Maurice Hope - no stain on his character.

Police find massive cannabis haul after chance inquiry

UNDERCOVER cops found drugs with a street value of £500,000 when they swooped on a van in Sumnerfield Road, Finsbury Park, on Monday afternoon.

The massive quarter-of-a-ton haul of what police believe to be high-grade cannabis was discovered almost by accident.

Stoke Newington detectives Bruce Galbraith and Steve Goodey were sup-

posed to be on a different job entirely when they pounced - keeping watch on nearby lock-up garages for stolen cars. They had become suspicious when a van pulled up, and decided to search the vehicle after questioning the driver and a passenger. The drugs haul, weighing 230 kilos, was discovered packed into 16 boxes.

Two men appeared at Highbury Magistrates' Court on Wednesday,

charged with possession of drugs with intent to supply. Dean Zepheria, 20, from Stanmore, Middlesex, and Ashley Beedley, 24, from Fulham, were remanded in custody until next Wednesday.

Det Insp Andy Hunter, head of Stoke Newington crime squad, said: "This was an excellent piece of police work. The officers showed great initiative and ability."

HACKNEY'S former world light-middleweight boxing champion, Maurice Hope, won £50,000 damages from the Metropolitan Police last week after claiming racist cops had falsely imprisoned him.

The 38-year-old was stopped by two officers from City Road police station as he sat smoking in his car in a traffic jam in Old Street two years ago, the High Court heard.

They accused him of having smoked cannabis and swallowing several packets of the drug.

But the case was thrown out when it came to court last year because the prosecution offered no evidence. The judge said he could leave "without any stain on his character."

Hope brought a case for false arrest and malicious prosecution against the police who agreed to pay damages and his costs.

Maurice now lives in the West Indies, but his wife and daughter still run Caprius hairdressers in Kingsland Road, Dalston.

"After I was banded to the ground by po-

Maurice Hope awarded damages over 'racist' arrest

lice, several members of the public helped by sitting on my back and I fell near to death because I couldn't breathe," he said.

"If I hadn't been Maurice Hope and hadn't had good barristers to defend my good character, I'm sure I would have been convicted."

"I've done plenty of charity functions for the police in the past so the treatment I received upset me. I'm not saying all police are bad, but there are still a few who discriminate."

The Metropolitan Police denied the claims but agreed to pay substantial damages "without prejudice."

HG

30.11.90

Awareness course to break down barriers

Policemen to get AIDS training

HACKNEY'S coppers are to be given special training on AIDS issues by local health experts in a pilot scheme that is the first of its kind in London.

Fifteen of the boys in blue, from Hackney, Stoke Newington and City Road police stations, will spend Monday at Homerton Hospital learning all about the virus and how it is transmitted.

Many of the cops know little about the potentially deadly disease, yet face situations all the time where they could come into contact with the virus - where, for example, people are bleeding from injuries from car crashes or stabbings.

It is the idea of City and Hackney

by STEWART FOWLER

Health Authority's Action on AIDS team, based at St Leonard's Hospital in Nuttall Street, Hoxton, and has the full support of the borough's top cops.

If the pilot scheme is a success, every policeman in Hackney could eventually take part.

Chief Supt Peter Twist, from City Road police station, said: "Police officers are increasingly concerned about the numbers of people who may be HIV positive, and the possible risks they face in dealing with them."

"I am not aware of any officer who has contracted HIV infection through his

work, but many men and women serving in the force are concerned over the issue.

"Many people in society have fears and misapprehensions and lack specialist knowledge about HIV and AIDS and how it might be relevant to them."

"If this training proves to be useful, we hope to train every police officer working in Hackney. I am sure that at an early stage the information gained from the course will be passed on to the officers' colleagues."

George Leahy, from Action on AIDS, added: "The officers will be given awareness training of HIV and how it can be transmitted. We hope this will help to break down the barriers surrounding the disease."

Asians convicted over assault after march

FOUR young Asians were remanded for reports at the Old Bailey for being involved in violent disorder when a defenceless white man was viciously attacked by a 20-strong crowd.

One of them, Abdul Gofur, was found guilty of causing bodily harm to the victim, Terence Swinney, 42, by punching him. He admitted violent disorder.

Mr Swinney, who was savagely beaten and stabbed, was lucky to escape with his life, the court heard.

The three others were convicted of being involved in violent disorder. The attack followed a "Rights for Whites" march in which some British National Party members took part as police kept them apart from anti-fascist groups.

The marchers, numbering about 200, walked from Bethnal Green police station to Morpeth secondary school and back, in February following the stabbing of a 17-year-old white boy at the school.

Mr Swinney had taken part in the march with his wife and son Peter and was driving home when his windscreen was shattered by a brick.

He got out of the car and knocked down a young Asian he believed had thrown the brick, the court heard. A crowd of young Asians then

surrounded him and he was beaten with weapons including iron bars, a tree branch and a baseball bat.

He was then held helpless while an unknown attacker stabbed him repeatedly in the face and body at Ben Johnson Road, Stepney.

Police later arrested the four accused, aged between 16 and 18, who were convicted of being present at the scene of the disorder.

Malik Miah, 17, who was alleged to have carried out the stabbing, was cleared of a charge of attempted murder, which was withdrawn by the judge. He was also found not guilty of wounding Mr Swinney.

Abdul Alim and Abdul Halim were cleared of causing him grievous bodily harm. All three were convicted of violent disorder.

They had all pleaded not guilty. The jury returned the verdicts after a retirement of nearly two hours.

The Recorder of London, Judge Lawrence Verney, remanded them on bail and ordered that the court be provided with reports on each before sentence is passed. Each denied being involved in the assaults.

Earlier prosecuting counsel David Bate said the attack on Mr Swinney was one of a number of racial incidents in London as a result of the protest march by some white parents.

Mum lives in fear of racists

A YOUNG mum and her two children are living in fear of racists, and she blames a miscarriage on the bigoted thugs.

Hasina Dawood, 27, of Banister House, Homerton High Street, doesn't let her children out to play in case Saleha, aged seven, and Abdul Hal, aged five, are attacked or beaten up.

"For the past three years my children have been spat on, the windows to my flat have been smashed, and racist graffiti daubed on the walls," she said. "I've had people urinating on the door and pushing excrement and used condoms through the

letter-box. I'm afraid that next time it could be a petrol bomb."

She claims that a miscarriage she suffered in March was due to the stress of the harassment, and she is expecting another baby in April.

A spokesperson for Hackney Council said: "She is a high priority for a transfer, and as soon as suitable accommodation is available we will move her."

"We sympathise with her predicament, but she needs a three-bedroomed property and the pressure on our housing stock is so great that there are few available."

HQ 7.12.90

Top cop reveals a complaints branch

THE THIRD annual meeting of the Hackney Police and Community Consultative group could have been a stormy affair, with a guest speaker from the Police Complaints Authority - but in fact the evening passed without incident.

With the Gary Sutch affair fresh in everyone's mind with seven constables from City Road police station facing the sack, the PCA deputy chairman, Brigadier John Pownall, was quick to make it clear he could not comment on individual cases.

But a number of people brought up the length of time - up to three years - it takes for the PCA to investigate complaints from the public about the police.

And in the Gary Sutch case, the seven constables were paid over £200,000 in wages whilst suspended.

"This borough can't afford to pay that sort of money," said worried Hackney resident Fred Pollard. "Half of us can't even afford to pay the poll tax."

Top Tory, Joe Lobenstein added: "It is extraordinary that some cases take two to three years. A court case doesn't take that long."

Brigadier Pownall responded: "I personally think there is a tendency to suspend officers rather too readily."

"I can understand that if an officer is accused of an offence it might well be sensible to withdraw him from direct contact with the public, but I can't understand why he can't then be employed in some administrative job - even if he allegedly assaulted someone."

"He could then at least claim his pay whilst the case is being investigated."

Brigadier Pownall stressed that on average it takes between six to eight months to investigate a case, rather than years, and delay can be caused while witnesses are contacted.

Hackney's top cop, Chief Supt Roy Clark, revealed that Hackney is covered by a special area complaints investigation branch, with seven chief inspectors and support staff to investigate complaints in the borough.

Normally, a complaint against the police is investigated by one officer of the rank of chief inspector or above, plus a sergeant or inspector working with him.

Brigadier moves to allay bias fear

THE Police Complaints Authority is a totally independent body, its deputy chairman, Brigadier John Pownall stressed, even though the police carry out their own investigations into complaints.

Any complaint from a member of the public must be recorded by the most senior officer at the police station, but if the complaint is only "minor", the PCA usually only asks for a satisfactory explanation of the police officer's conduct and an apology.

In the case of, for example, someone complaining they were beaten up while in police custody it is for the PCA to "see the police conduct their inquiries into the complaint thoroughly and fairly," said Brigadier Pownall.

If a criminal offence may have been committed, the papers are sent to the Director of Public Prosecutions to decide whether to take further action in the courts.

If there has been no criminal offence, it is for the police to decide if disciplinary action should be taken against an officer.

"We don't have the resources to supervise every investigation," said the brigadier. "But all cases, whether supervised by us or not, come to the PCA and are scrutinized very, very carefully."

To prefer disciplinary charges against a police officer the case has to be proved beyond reasonable doubt. That's a very high standard of proof, and in many cases the evidence is simply not there to prove to that standard.

Where a case can't be proved, a police officer can still be given "advice" or a "dressing down" by a senior officer, known as "advice and admonishment," which is recorded in his file.

Fourteen per cent of cases result in some form of disciplinary action being taken, with half of that number being advice and admonishment.

By far the largest category of complaint by the public is allegations of assault by a police officer.

Two accused of murder at off licence

TWO men appeared at Old Street Magistrates' Court this week charged with the murder of shopkeeper Baldev Hoondle, who was gunned down at his off licence in Lower Clapton Road in July.

Jobless Eric Samuels, aged 26, from Downs Road, Lower Clapton, was remanded in custody yesterday (Thursday). Unemployed Oliver Campbell, aged 20, from Manor Road, Stratford, appeared on the same charge on Monday and was remanded in custody until December 10.

An inquest into Mr Hoondle's death was opened and adjourned at Poplar Coroner's Court on Wednesday. Pathologist Dr Paul Chui gave the cause of death as a gunshot wound to the head.



● The Shen-Ola Nightclub in Hackney Wick, scene of the killing.

Nightclub murder squad face wall of silence



● Irvine 'Nicky' Johnson, 20, shot dead by mystery gunmen.

MURDER squad detectives hunting the cold-blooded killers of a young party-goer at a Hackney nightclub have come up against a wall of silence.

They are desperate to trace anyone who was at the Shen-Ola nightclub in Waterden Road, Hackney Wick, in the early hours of last Friday morning when gunmen opened fire at point-blank range at two of the customers.

Detectives think many eye-witnesses left the club immediately after the shooting, before police arrived, leaving 20-year-old Highbury student Irvine 'Nicky' Johnson dying in a pool of blood.

He was shot in the head and leg, and despite emergency surgery he died on the operating table at Homerton Hospital six hours later.

Follow clubber Joseph Walters, 33, from Stoke Newington, was shot in the leg but was not seriously injured, and was released from hospital later the same day after treatment.

Although the club was clearing everyone out after a night of dancing to a reggae sound system, there were still about 250 people who hadn't left and must have seen what happened.

Det Supt Harry Wilkins, leading the hunt for the killers, said: "We are looking for dangerous individuals. They are obviously quite ruthless, and must be caught."

"But so far we have not had people rushing forward to talk to us, and we have come up against a wall of silence."

"We are desperate for anyone who was at the club at the time of the killing to get in touch."

"What they have to say will be treated with the strictest confidence."

An incident room has been set up at Arbour Square police station in Stepney. Phone 071-488 6536



● Commander Brian Plaxton.



● Commander David Kendrick

New cops go back to their roots

TWO new top cops will be returning to their roots in East London when they take up jobs at City Road station.

Commander David Kendrick, 46, the new man in charge of East London operations, began his career at the old Commercial Road station in 1963, but moved away to a string of posts in other parts of the city.

He was Chief Inspector at Stoke Newington from 1974-76, was the first ex-cadet to become Commandant of the Metropolitan Police cadet

corps, and now replaces Commander George Neas who moves to head the new Scotland Yard Flying Squad.

Commander Brian Plaxton, 47, moves to City Road to be in charge of personnel from Bethnal Green where he was Chief Superintendent from 1967.

Cdr Plaxton rose through the ranks after moving to Hackney in 1967, but also qualified as a barrister in 1981.

Conditions improve in police cells say visitors

CONDITIONS for prisoners held in Hackney's police cells have improved according to the public watchdog set up to look after their welfare.

That's the view of the borough's 26 lay visitors - ordinary citizens who check the state of the cells and the treatment of detainees held in Hackney's three police stations.

Many changes have been brought about because of pressure from Hackney's Lay Visitors' Panel, says its latest annual report.

They include the painting of cells at Hackney police station and more frequent cleaning of cells, although there is still room for improvement says the report.

In some cases, lay visitors have also arranged with custody officers for detainees to be moved to cleaner cells.

And they have helped prisoners contact relatives or a solicitor by telephoning on their behalf as well as requesting a doctor be called to examine them.

Another of the panel's achievements was to get a shower for prisoners installed in Stoke Newington's new £7 million police station.

The panel noticed there was no shower on a tour of the station just before it was officially opened in April, and made representations to the Home Office for one to be installed.

Lay visitors also donated their travelling expenses towards buying a picture for the station's purpose-built rape suite as a way of making the surroundings more homely for victims.

"We have achieved quite a lot," said the panel's chairperson, Betty Blomfield, "but when you talk about the state of the cells and facilities for prisoners you have to bear in mind the age of stations like Hackney and City Road, which are Victorian buildings."

The number of accepted visits from January to November of this year totalled 356, an increase of 109 on last year. The number of detainees who refused a visit was 69, that includes those asleep, drunk or being interviewed by detectives at the time of the visit.

One of the recommendations made in the report is that the police discontinue with the services of contract cleaners and employ local people to clean cells.

"The cells are cleaned twice a day, but often the contract cleaners are overworked and underpaid and sometimes don't do a very good job," added Betty Blomfield.

"By reverting back to employing their own cleaning staff there would be better supervision because they would be on site all the time."

HC 7.12.90

PARTNERS IN CRIME PREVENTION

Co-operation between the police, the community and the Council is the key to beating crime. Launching a joint Police and Council response to a Home Office circular on crime prevention, Council Leader John McCafferty pointed to successful co-operative ventures.

"The Council is committed to working closely with the local Police" he said. The 'Get Street Bright' project, for example, brought together both Police and Council Officers to target street lighting improvements where they are needed".



Pictured launching the joint response are Council Leader John McCafferty (seated centre) with Chief Executive Jerry White (standing left) and Chief Superintendents Roy Clarke from Stoke Newington (standing centre) and Niall Mulvihill from Hackney (seated right).

HACKNEY HERALD

7.12.90

Seven PCs fired over assault

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

SEVEN London policemen were sacked yesterday as a result of an incident in 1987 when a young man was badly beaten up in a pub.

The constables, all from City Road police station in Hackney, have been suspended for more than three years. The seven, Alan Barr, Paul Caddy, Paul Wells, Peter Clissold, Carl Simon, Simon Haw and David Thompson, were found guilty at an internal police tribunal in October of discreditable conduct.

Last night Gary Stretch, the victim of the attack, welcomed the sackings. "I'm glad it's all over," he said. "I was frightened that they would be let back in the force."

A Scotland Yard spokesman said the sackings were evidence of the Metropolitan Police's desire to show that offending officers would be severely dealt with. "Behaviour like this will not be tolerated."

The incident which led to the sackings took place at a pub in east London on November 5, 1987. Mr Stretch, now aged 27 and working as a driver, was drinking with friends after a funeral when he was spotted by the off-duty officers. He was known to them, having been convicted twice for actual bodily harm, but had not been in trouble for three years.

Threatening remarks were made by some of the officers and he was attacked from behind with a beer glass, which almost severed his ear. He was dragged from the pub and

kicked when on the ground. He was taken unconscious to the London Hospital.

His father, Eddie, and a barmaid, Joanne Legg, whose father was a policeman, made a complaint about the officers' behaviour.

A report was sent to the Director of Public Prosecutions who decided there was insufficient evidence to prosecute. The internal inquiry was proceeded with after the officers failed to have the case thrown out at a judicial review because of the time that had elapsed.

Mr Stretch and a number of witnesses gave evidence during the case. Many of the officers were reportedly visibly distressed at the result of the hearing, announced on November 1. It appeared that many of them felt they would be cleared.

A Police Federation spokesman said he knew that some of the men felt they had been treated unfairly but that they had to accept the decision. The sacked officers are considering an appeal, which must be lodged within 21 days.

Mr Stretch said last night he would continue to pursue a civil action for damages against the police.

The tribunal was heard in camera and details emerged only through Mr Stretch and his witnesses. The Metropolitan Police are examining ways of making public such decisions and the relevant punishments.

The sackings are the most serious disciplinary action against a group of officers since the jailing in 1987 of four officers who had beaten up a group of youths in Holloway, north London, after a funfair.

GUARDIAN 8.12.90

Jews plan action to combat street attacks

Jews in Hackney are to set up a "resistance" organisation following a spate of alleged anti-Semitic attacks in the area.

They claim anti-Semitic attacks, including cemetery desecrations and obscene graffiti, are on the increase and their community must defend itself.

A public meeting at the Hackney Urban Studies Centre in Lower Clapton Road next Tuesday will hear calls for patrols in Stamford Hill.

Meeting organiser David King, of Hackney Jewish Socialist Group, said: "We and a lot of Jewish people are very concerned

about the rise in anti-Semitic attacks over the last eight months or so.

"We want to think about what we can do and fight back in some way."

Chief Supt Roy Clark, of Stoke Newington police, said there had been only two incidents since Sep-

tember which could be seen as anti-Semitic, and this hardly represented an upsurge.

But he added: "I would applaud any effort to highlight the problem of racial behaviour. Any effort to stamp it out must be applauded but we must stop at street patrols."

Gary to fight for compensation

Stretch case police thrown out of force

by STEWART FOWLER

SEVEN City Road coppers have at last been thrown out of the police force more than three years after a savage attack on Hoxton van driver Gary Stretch, who was slashed with a broken beer bottle and kicked unconscious outside a Hackney pub.

It is the biggest mass sacking ever by Scotland Yard, who said the policemen had "abused their positions of trust" and their behaviour "could not be tolerated."

But Gary, 27, from the Cranston Estate, has pledged to continue his fight for justice with a claim for compensation in the civil courts.

He was drinking in The Limes pub in Hackney Road in November 1987 when the off-duty coppers smashed a beer glass in his face, partly severing his ear, dragged him outside, stripped his clothes off and kicked him unconscious. He spent a week recovering in hospital.

None of the seven constables - Paul Wells, Alan Barr, Peter Claxson, Paul Cadogan, Carl Simon, David Thompson and Simon Haw - ever faced criminal proceedings for the attack, which they denied, after the Crown Prosecution Service decided there was insufficient evidence to press charges.

They were suspended on full pay, and over £300,000 was paid to them in wages during that time. A police disciplinary tribunal last month recommended they be fired, and last Friday the acting Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, Sir John Dellow, officially gave them the sack.



● Gary Stretch.

Gary Stretch is pleased to see them go, but he said: "I'm very bitter it's taken three years to come to a conclusion. It just goes to show there's still one law for the police and one for the public."

"It's unbelievable there was never a criminal trial. The worst thing is that these people were being paid to uphold the law and protect the public, yet they took the law into their own hands that night - and nearly got away with it, too."

"You think something like that will never happen to you, but if it could happen to me in front of a pub full of witnesses then it could happen to anyone."

"Of course I'm pleased they've been sacked, but it's not a time for celebration. I've had to battle long and hard for justice, and I'm not finished yet - hopefully my civil action against the constables will begin in the New Year."

Hackney MP Brian Sodgemoor said: "These policemen were a disgrace to the force. It is to the police's credit that they got rid of them. But I don't think justice has been done. The officers should have faced criminal charges in front of a jury who would have decided whether they were guilty or not."

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● Gary in hospital after the incident with his father, Eddie.

Whole family have suffered, says dad

ALTHOUGH Gary was the one brutally beaten up, his whole family have suffered with him through the three-year ordeal.

His father, Eddie Stretch, a 55-year-old post office worker, said: "My wife has wanted to stay out of the spotlight, but it had a terrible effect on her particularly. The shock of seeing Gary in hospital after the attack made her ill for ages afterwards."

"But we've always been close as a family and we stuck by him. All our neighbours and friends supported us and people have stopped us on the street to say well done for sticking with it."

"Gary is no angel, but he was a completely innocent victim in this case. The constables were complete strangers to him, the disciplinary hearing was the first time he saw their faces, apart from the night it happened."

"The people of Hackney should question how long this case has taken, and the cost in wages to the police officers alone - £300,000 is a lot of money."

"I'm extremely pleased these men are out of the force, they should never have been walking the streets in uniform. I just hope we can now get on with our lives," added Mr Stretch. And he thanked the Hackney Gazette for its impartial reporting of the case and the publicity given to the saga.

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● Chief Supt Peter Twist learns about AIDS from specialist consultant Dr Anita Houghton.

Police AIDS training launched

FIFTEEN of Hackney's coppers were in hospital this week, but no, there hasn't been another violent riot in the borough - they are the first London bobbies to be given special training on AIDS.

The boys in blue, from Hackney, City Road and Stoke Newington police stations, spent Monday at Homerton Hospital with AIDS

expert Dr Anita Houghton, who is the hospital's consultant in communicable disease control.

Many of the coppers know little about the potentially deadly disease, yet are faced daily with situations where they could come into contact with the disease through car crashes, stabbings, drug raids - anywhere

where people are bleeding.

City and Hackney Healths Authority's Action on AIDS team aim to change all that once and for all.

There's a series of lessons on how the virus is spread, what it does and how to safely handle blood.

Chief Supt Peter Twist, who is in charge of training for the borough's bobbies, said: "If this pilot scheme is successful, we hope to train every police officer working in Hackney."

"Many police officers, like many people in society at large, have fears and misapprehensions about AIDS that are not based on fact. It will be a learning experience for us all."

HC 14.12.90

Man jailed in baby food crime was ex-borough cop

BLACKMAILING ex-cop Rodney Whitchelo, who threatened to kill babies by spiking their food, is a former Hackney police officer, born and educated in the borough.

Whitchelo, jailed this week for 17 years, launched his horrific "food terrorism" campaign just weeks after leaving the City Road station.

The former detective was convicted of threatening to kill Heinz customers, six blackmail charges, two of food poisoning and two of trying to get property by deception from Heinz.

Whitchelo was born in Hackney in 1947, took O-levels at the old South Hackney Secondary Modern and A-levels at Hackney College before leaving the area and eventually becoming a detective sergeant with the Met's regional crimes squad.

But in 1988 he was transferred to the City Road station where he worked on continuing court cases from his old squad until he retired that July on health grounds.

Det Chief Insp Chris Newman, ex-head at City Road and Hackney, said Whitchelo had done virtual-

ly no work in the borough because of the cases.

DCI Newman added: "He deserved everything he got. It was an awful crime."

Just two months after leaving City Road, Whitchelo, of Hornchurch, Essex, started to blackmail Pedigree Chum pet foods, spiking two dog food tins and getting £15,000-£17,000.

In March 1989, he began to demand up to £1 million from Heinz, threatening to spike baby food, and for six months he evaded capture as ex-police colleagues innocently told him of their investigation.

HG

21.12.90

Capital spending increased to meet crime concern

Baker authorises 700 extra police

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

THE Home Secretary, Kenneth Baker, yesterday announced increases of 25 per cent in capital spending by police forces and the allocation of an extra 700 officers.

The announcements came in the wake of this week's record crime figures and criticism of government allocations from the police themselves.

The Home Secretary said that the announcement was "further demonstration of the Government's continuing support to the police and our determination to fight crime."

"Since 1979 the Government has provided for a record increase of more than 15,500 police officers," he said in a written parliamentary answer. "We have also provided for an unprecedented increase in civilians who release police from desk work so that they can undertake crime fighting duties."

The largest increases in force are 100 in the Metropolitan Police and 48 in the West Mid-

lands. Thames Valley will get 40 officers.

The Association of Chief Police Officers welcomed the increases, but with strict reservations.

David Owen, its president and the Chief Constable of North Wales commented: "For most forces, all this has done is to bring them up to the authorised levels of 11 years ago, plus a modest 3 per cent to 4 per cent increase, during a decade in which demands upon police increased beyond all expectations."

Mr Baker said: "Over 80 per cent of the 700 approved posts will be deployed on operational duties, mainly as constables. The Government has also made provision for 1,100 more civilian staff; 150 of these will go to the Metropolitan police, which will release 100 officers on administration work to take up operational duties."

Out of 35 provincial forces, 34 applied for manpower increases, which have been granted. Total police strength at the end of September 1990 was 127,115, an increase of 15,682 since May 1979.

The capital allocation, for

buildings, vehicles and equipment, rises from £173.7 million this financial year to £219 million in 1991/92, Mr Baker said.

Police authorities will be given Home Office money to meet 51 per cent of the costs of 21 large building schemes in progress; another 21 start in 1991/92. In addition, police authorities will be able to borrow £67 million to meet their 49 per cent share, an increase of 63 per cent.

The 700 posts are: Avon and Somerset, 4; Bedfordshire, 32; Cambridgeshire, 16; Cheshire, 11; Cumbria, 8; Derbyshire, 8; Devon and Cornwall, 15; Dorset, 15; Durham, 11; Essex, 17; Gloucestershire, 19; Greater Manchester, 22; Hampshire, 27; Hertfordshire, 11; Humberside, 18; Kent, 28; Lancashire, 22; Leicestershire, 13; Lincolnshire, 8; Merseyside, 5; Norfolk, 12; Northamptonshire, 19; Northumbria, 26; North Yorkshire, 6; South Yorkshire, 18; Staffordshire, 8; Suffolk, 11; Surrey, 11; Sussex, 18; Thames Valley, 40; Warwickshire, 8; West Midlands, 48; West Yorkshire, 14; Wiltshire, 15; Metropolitan Police, 100; Regional Crime Squad, 36.

GUARDIAN

21.12.90

Police 'need training' to face violence

Duncan Campbell
Crime Correspondent

THE police should be better trained to handle potentially violent situations and get more guidance from their senior officers, a report on assaults on police suggests.

The report, *Why Police Are Assaulted*, published in this month's *Policing*, was submitted by a team led by researcher Lesley Noaks, from the University of Wales, and by PC Steven Christopher, of South Wales police.

Their analysis of the reasons for and the circumstances of the attacks was prompted by reports that they were increasing.

The report says the police service needs to monitor and evaluate the way it deals with crowd dispersal, particularly late at night at weekends.

Senior officers should give more guidance about the right time to intervene: "a lack of direction can cause confusion".

The researchers suggest that the police should consider scrapping their traditional helmets, pointing out that male constables often discard them when they need to run, which leaves them vulnerable. Discarded helmets were seen as trophies by attackers.

The study, which looked at 619 South Wales assaults on police in 1988, found that 90 per cent of the offenders were male, predominantly from the 17-25 age group, with an average age of 23.

Eighty per cent had criminal records, 60 per cent were recidivists, and 18 per cent had more than 30 convictions each. Forty per cent knew the officer concerned.

The researchers found evidence of a "high level of support for offenders' actions"

from their friends. One attacker remarked when interviewed: "My friends loved it; they didn't mind." Another said: "They all thought it was quite funny — none of us like the police."

Sixty per cent of assailants were unemployed. The local unemployment figure was 13 per cent.

The report suggests that the police were seen as a "convenient and readily available scapegoat" for the frustrations of some of the unemployed.

Alcohol was a pervasive feature, but "the view that drinking causes assaults is too crude, even although alcohol may serve as a catalyst".

Around 70 per cent of the assailants accused the police of provocation, citing over-reaction and unwillingness to listen. But there was no blanket condemnation of the police.

Women officers are seen to be as much at risk of assault as their male colleagues. Eight per cent of victims were women — the percentage of women officers in the force.

Constables made up 82 per cent of those assaulted. Punching, kicking, wrestling and head-butting were the most frequent means of attack.

In 90 per cent of cases the officers were accompanied.

"It is conceivable that accompanied officers behave in a more confident manner in their dealings with the public, which could be interpreted by the public as an overly assertive and authoritarian stance," the report says.

The researchers recommend officers to "project a responsive image to individuals, as opposed to giving a sense of having prejudged the issue."

They should avoid putting offenders in a position where they feel unable to back down. More training is needed to accomplish this.

GUARDIAN

27.12.90



© Cornell Dowe (left) and Kenneth Joseph are congratulated by Chief Supt Roy Clarke.

Top cop praises courage of blaze rescue heroes

TWO heroes who risked their lives to rescue a couple of squatters from a blaze in which a teenager died have been praised by Stoke Newington's top cop.

Chief Supt Roy Clarke paid tribute to the courage of Cornell Dowe, 28, and Kenneth Joseph, 28, who braved flames to drag the two men to safety after an early-hours arson attack on the squat in Graham Road, Dalston, last month. Detectives are treating the fire in which 19-year-old John Ennis died as murder.

The plucky pair were driving past on their way home from a family christening when they spotted the burning house.

They risked their lives to drag badly burned Patrick Carpenter, 21, and Gerald Doyle, 21, from the basement at the front of the house where they landed after jumping from a first-floor window.

One of the squatters suffered serious head injuries, but his condition

had improved enough for him to be moved to a hospital in his home town of Dublin.

Cornell, who lives in Old Street and works as a Hackney Council housing officer, said: "I was frightened, but we could hear groans coming from the basement and Kenneth persuaded me we had to help them. You don't think about yourself at times like that."

Chief Supt Roy Clarke asked to meet the pair personally and presented them with a letter of appreciation.

"They could have turned a blind eye and driven past, but they showed public spiritedness and a special kind of courage that deserves recognition," he said. "They ignored the danger and undoubtedly saved the lives of the two squatters."

The police are now recommending that the pair receive a bravery award from the Royal Humane Society.

Bid to ban school election meetings

TOWN HALL bosses want the government to ban extremist groups like the British National Party from using schools for election rallies.

Under existing laws any political group can use schools for election meetings, but since the Town Hall elections in May, and two by-elections in Tower Hamlets, the borough's ruling Liberals say they don't want the BNP stirring up race-hatred in their schools.

The two by-election rallies, at Weavers Fields School in Bethnal Green in August and Old Ford Primary School, Bow, in July, required a massive police presence to keep BNP

"Rights For Whites" supporters and rival SWP and Anti-Fascist Action demonstrators apart.

At Weavers Fields six men were arrested after a mounted-police cavalry charge to break up a scuffle.

The meetings did not result in any damage but stones were thrown at Weavers Fields School. Police submitted reports of the speeches to the Crown Prosecution Service who said they would not be prosecuting the BNP speakers for inciting racial hatred.

Teachers, governors and residents are angry that school premises can be used as a platform for race-hate speeches, especially in a borough where there is no overall ethnic majority among the school population.

The borough's education boss, Cllr Jonathan Stokes, said: "It may be appropriate for rural schools to be used for election meetings where the alternative venues are limited."

"But inner city areas have numerous suitable public buildings that can be used. If there is no change I see further trouble ahead."

Schools and people around them could face considerable aggression. There have been incidents in Tower Hamlets this year where both teachers and residents protested in the strongest terms.

"We know there have been incidents of public disorder after the use of council buildings by some groups and this must come to an end."

"Councils should be given discretion over the use of their premises."

The council is putting pressure on the Liberal Borough Authority and the Labour-dominated Association of Metropolitan Authorities to press for change, but they warn it could take years rather than months.

Bethnal Green's top cop, Chief Supt Ivan Stirling, was sceptical about the proposed change: "It's a pretty obvious dilemma. Just because we don't like someone else's point of view we can't really suppress them. Policing these sort of meetings is very costly, but I could not put a price on it without a lot of digging around. If you start banning groups then the rules of democracy no longer apply."

Action group see red over kerb crawlers

Top-level meeting over vice menace

HOME OFFICE Minister John Patten has had the facts of life spelt out to him about rising crime and prostitution in Amhurst Park's notorious red light district.

In a half-hour meeting at the Home Office in Queen Anne's Gate, Westminster, a member of the Amhurst Park Action Group told Mr Patten that extra police and tougher fines for curb crawlers were needed to combat the vice trade and

associated crimes.

Mr Patten was sympathetic but could give no firm promises about new measures to beat crime.

Reprisals

The APAG speaker who did not want to be named for fear of reprisals said: "The meeting went quite well. We were able to make him aware of the problems we have in the area. Also the general shortfall in policing in Hackney due to

the very high crime rate in the area.

"He listened to our two main points about extra policing and a change in legislation making fines tougher but he could not commit himself to anything," she said.

The meeting was arranged two months ago by Hackney North and Stoke Newington MP Diane Abbott, who was also at the Home Office on Monday.

The Minister hinted the government may force through legislation with heavier fines for persistent curb crawling.

The APAG spokesperson went on:

"We are now getting more co-operation from Stoke Newington police under their new Chief Superintendent because if prostitution is under control then policemen can be diverted to the real problems like murder."

Productive

"The meeting was a productive step for APAG as it highlighted the co-operation between the council and the police."

"The Action Group also told him that the Home Office should back a 'Safer Cities Initiative' in Hackney where government money is targeted at schemes to prevent crime and increase the well being of the community."

"Mr Patten was sympathetic but the wheels of government grind slowly," she added.

Teenage girl blocked police raid

A TEENAGER went berserk when police raided her mother's flat in search of drugs and was joined by a friend who blocked the officer's entry, a court heard.

"A large number of police were there, it was a frightening experience all around," the girl's lawyer, Mr Roy Barnett, told Highbury Corner Court. Julian Sandra Parkinson, 18, of Hendale House, Northwood Road, Upper Clapton, admitted using threatening behaviour at her home on December 13.

Her friend, 21-year-old Maria Ferrance, also joined, of Arvola Street, Dalston, admitted obstructing police at Hendale House.

Prosecutor Anthony Barry told the court police visited Parkinson's mother armed with a search warrant when Ferrance grabbed it, threw it to the floor and blocked the officers in the hallway.

The mother was eventually arrested and as she was led out her daughter was seen leaping up and down outside, shouting and swearing at police.

Parkinson was fined £50 and Ferrance £25.

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